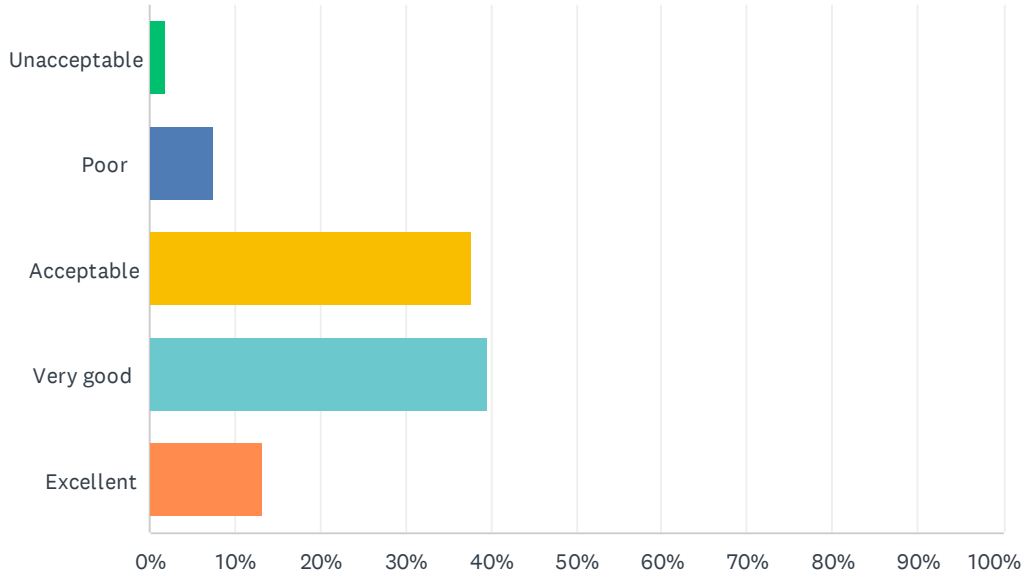


Q1 New TMMs only: What was the quality of the New TMM training leading up to 2022 Town Meeting?

Answered: 53 Skipped: 112



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Unacceptable	1.89%	1
Poor	7.55%	4
Acceptable	37.74%	20
Very good	39.62%	21
Excellent	13.21%	7
TOTAL		53

Q2 Please share any additional thoughts about preparations for Town Meeting.

Answered: 24 Skipped: 141

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	It was a bit of a scramble given all the last minute changes, especially changing the moderator who barely had time to get up to speed. I didn't have any problems other than occasionally logging in, etc.	2/1/2023 12:18 PM
2	Very easy to access online system and participate. Warrant document and "scorecard" were very helpful at understanding procedures	1/31/2023 4:49 PM
3	I really appreciated help setting up TMM Precinct reviews.	1/31/2023 4:38 PM
4	Previous Moderator did not help the new Moderator transition at all, making it a difficult start.	1/31/2023 3:36 PM
5	I enjoyed the training inthought since it was on zoom it prepared us for raising our hands when ready to speak, and also letting us know that there was a option to add comments in chat.	1/31/2023 2:09 PM
6	Mock Town Meeting was the most helpful part of the training. It's hard to comprehend how certain processes work until you see them in action.	1/30/2023 5:09 PM
7	I think the Moderator was diligent about preparing new TMMs (and other TMMs helped one another, too). In addition, I think diving in is a good way for new TMMs to learn (though perhaps it was easier when in-person).	1/26/2023 1:38 PM
8	Tech support helped with connectivity issues and after that, smooth sailing!	1/25/2023 9:12 AM
9	I felt prepared for both the tech and procedures.	1/25/2023 9:00 AM
10	The "debate" about zoom vs. the in-person forum was clearly a sham - a sign confirming "virtual" town meeting was posted at town hall *before* any vote - and the decision paved the way for a small cabal of Elitists running a secret Slack channel to manipulate the legislative process imposing Tyranny of the Majority. On each "debate," the protagonists immediately flooded the system with speaking requests to dominate the debate, appear as an overwhelming majority, and impose their radical and unpopular ideas on the people. The purported "software engineer" moderator let it continue, either ignorant of what was happening with the "virtual" format, or worse, part of the conspiracy. Rigged.	1/24/2023 10:30 PM
11	More training on format	1/24/2023 9:32 AM
12	Everyone needs a refresher. Live versus in person matters tremendously. Training on procedures that the new moderator may have changed matters a lot.	1/23/2023 9:40 AM
13	For me, the main challenges were about the technology. The training was helpful, but still there were challenges for me the first couple sessions.	1/23/2023 8:51 AM
14	Good instructions given re: use of portal.	1/22/2023 11:09 PM
15	Not a new member, but getting the major reports earlier would help everyone.	1/22/2023 9:09 PM
16	It was awhile back now, but I recall feeling like it was worthwhile to get a sense of how TM worked.	1/22/2023 8:52 PM
17	Unfortunately, I missed the initial training, as it was held during the school spring break and I was out of town. I was able to attend the tech dress rehearsal. It would be helpful to have training sessions in two different weeks, to better accommodate travel schedules.	1/22/2023 8:28 PM
18	Members need to be instructed to read the materials and do their research before TM, and not to use debate time to get things explained to them.	1/22/2023 7:41 PM
19	The training only covers the basics (predominantly the use of the technology), but really doesn't give a sense of the expectations and actual experience. I'm not sure any training	1/22/2023 7:28 PM

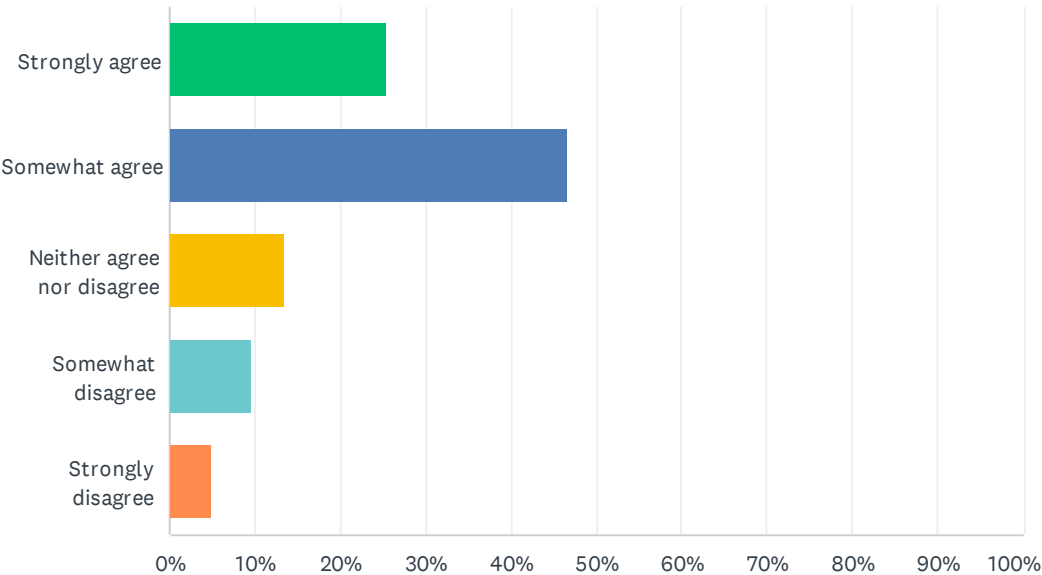
2022 Annual Town Meeting Feedback

could. Asking questions of and getting mentored by more experienced TMMs is how I really learned.

20	Got the basics. Some of the maneuverings during Town Meeting were beyond what I had learned.	1/22/2023 7:17 PM
21	I wasn't new last year, so I didn't participate in the new member training.	1/22/2023 6:45 PM
22	I was new a new TMM in 2021 - I would have appreciated an active buddy or maybe a group of buddies (newbies + veterans) I could connect with for questions and support. Maybe you did this for the 2022 newbies?	1/22/2023 5:41 PM
23	I would love to see an optional training every year for all town meeting members. My first year was the first pandemic year and I never got trained. That may also be one of the reasons that the Point of Order gets misused - I was never trained on the proper use!	1/22/2023 5:23 PM
24	I didn't know what I didn't know. Zoning 101 would've been helpful. Education from Fincom would've been helpful. Thankfully last year's Slack was helpful in educating and discussing topics	1/22/2023 4:56 PM

Q3 The Moderator followed clear procedures that facilitated the process of debate.

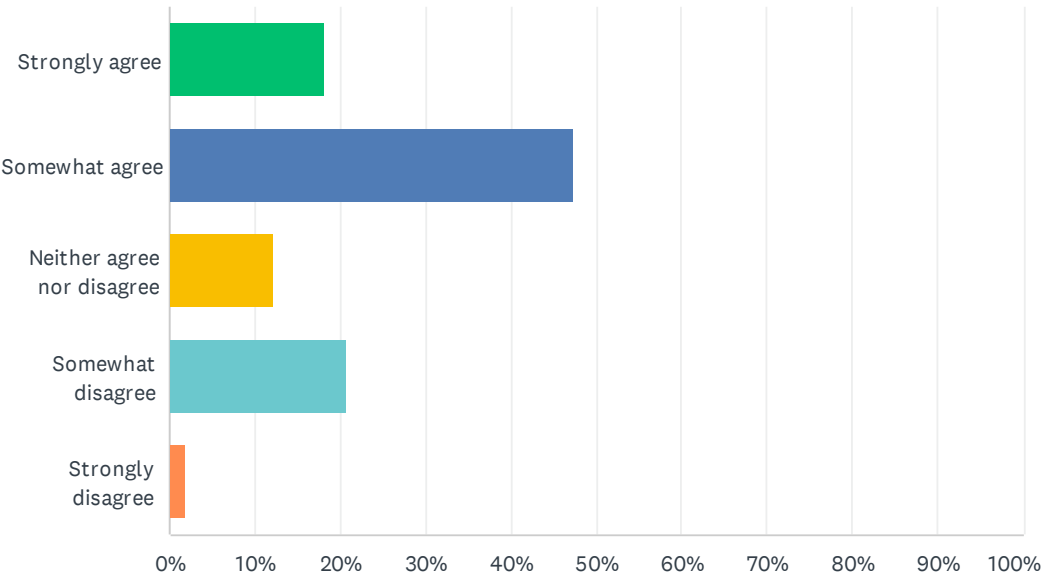
Answered: 165 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	25.45%	42
Somewhat agree	46.67%	77
Neither agree nor disagree	13.33%	22
Somewhat disagree	9.70%	16
Strongly disagree	4.85%	8
TOTAL		165

Q4 The speakers' arguments were useful to me during debate at Town Meeting.

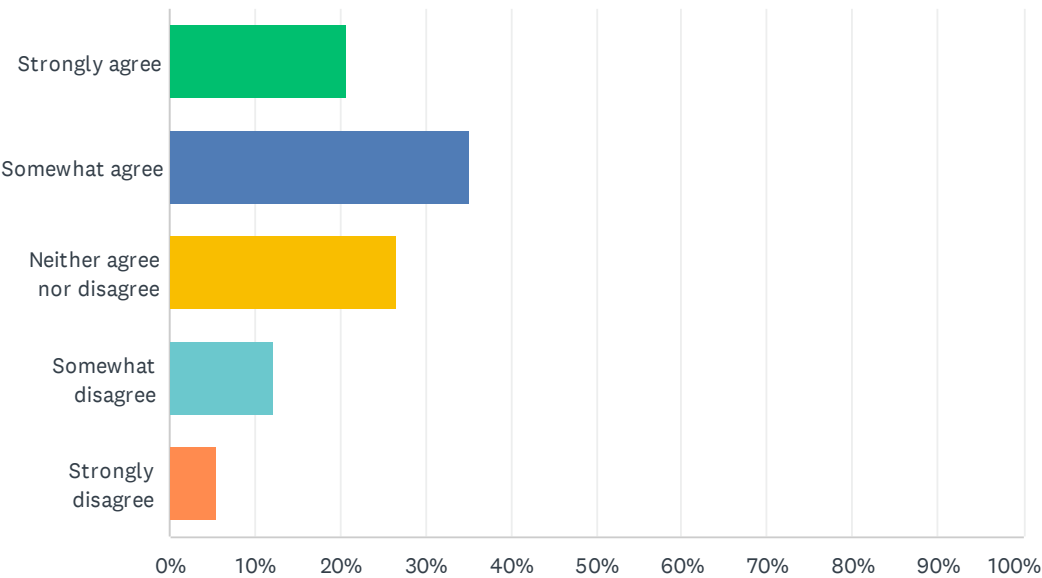
Answered: 165 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	18.18%	30
Somewhat agree	47.27%	78
Neither agree nor disagree	12.12%	20
Somewhat disagree	20.61%	34
Strongly disagree	1.82%	3
TOTAL		165

Q5 I had the opportunity to speak when I wanted to do so.

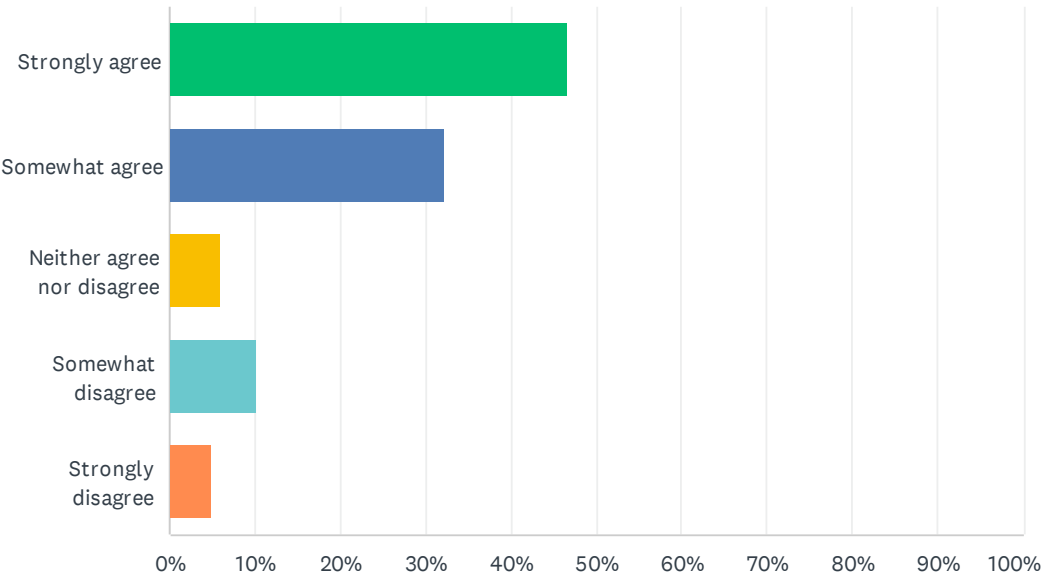
Answered: 165 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	20.61%	34
Somewhat agree	35.15%	58
Neither agree nor disagree	26.67%	44
Somewhat disagree	12.12%	20
Strongly disagree	5.45%	9
TOTAL		165

Q6 Participating as a Town Meeting Member was a worthwhile use of my time.

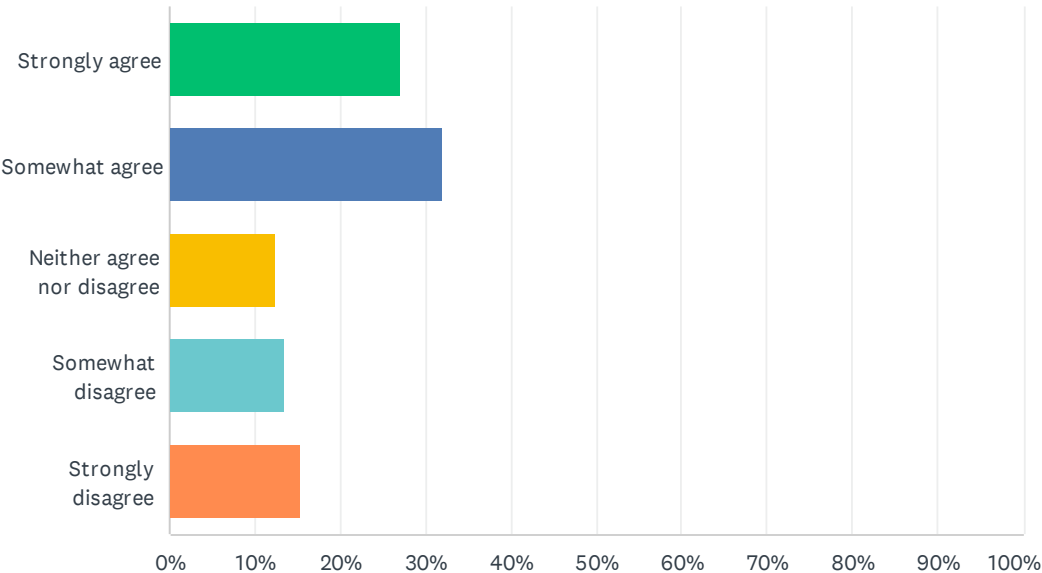
Answered: 165 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	46.67%	77
Somewhat agree	32.12%	53
Neither agree nor disagree	6.06%	10
Somewhat disagree	10.30%	17
Strongly disagree	4.85%	8
TOTAL		165

Q7 It would be helpful for Town Meeting Members to be able to express publicly their desire to terminate or continue debate without a Member first moving to terminate debate to bring it to a vote. E.g. displaying a live tally of electronically recorded non-binding sentiments – to continue debate vs terminate debate – that Members can change at any time during debate. (Consider the effects this might have on influencing Members to not share their perspectives in the face of a widespread desire to terminate debate.)

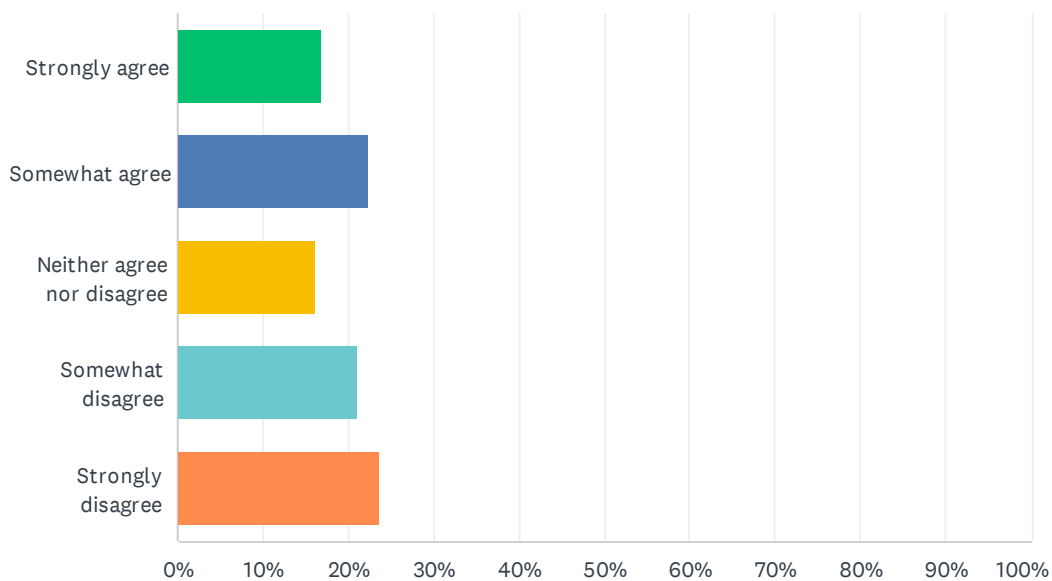
Answered: 163 Skipped: 2



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	26.99%	44
Somewhat agree	31.90%	52
Neither agree nor disagree	12.27%	20
Somewhat disagree	13.50%	22
Strongly disagree	15.34%	25
TOTAL		163

Q8 It would be helpful for Town Meeting Members to be able to express publicly their support or opposition during debate without the need to use the speaker queue to share their opinion verbally. E.g. displaying a live tally of electronically recorded non-binding sentiments that Members can change at any time during debate. (Consider the effects this might have on influencing Members' opinions before the merits have been raised during debate, and the impact on Members' decisions to speak in the face of widespread opposition.)

Answered: 161 Skipped: 4



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	16.77%	27
Somewhat agree	22.36%	36
Neither agree nor disagree	16.15%	26
Somewhat disagree	21.12%	34
Strongly disagree	23.60%	38
TOTAL		161

Q9 Please share any further thoughts about the process of debate.

Answered: 73 Skipped: 92

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	I like to listen to reasons and arguments of people even if repetitive to get a sense of the breadth of sentiment, i like to hear from different people particularly those I respect as people being differing expertise. I do not think people should be told their concerns related to articles are out of scope if pertinent but not mentioned in articles. I.e. environmental impact of gas leaf blowers is very pertinent in discussion of prohibiting them even if the reason an article was developed was about the noise.I feel very strongly about this.	2/6/2023 3:26 AM
2	Personally I derived no benefit from knowing who was in the speaker queue as was displayed at remote meeting. All it did was spark whining and complaining. I hope this will be discontinued.	2/4/2023 8:44 PM
3	that would be a very 'Social Media' like level of approbation or dissent. While it might be helpful to either encourage or dissuade debate, I would not want to base decisions on when to terminate debate on such potentially flippant responses.	2/3/2023 3:28 PM
4	Prioritize people who have not spoken or not as frequently as others and consider cumulative speaking times. Some TMMs like to give long-winded speeches on every issue and it is very tiresome and unhelpful.	2/1/2023 7:00 PM
5	Should make a que for those in support and those in opposition. Once one que is exhausted the other que should terminate after the next speaker in that que. This would move the process forward and lessen speakers repeating the same sentiments over and over.	2/1/2023 12:58 PM
6	It is not just a matter of for or against, there are many reasons why someone might be for or against that someone else may not have thought about, like unintended consequences etc. You will lose that important nuance in the quest for expedience and that should not be what town meeting is about.	2/1/2023 12:18 PM
7	I like the idea of being able to weigh in without speaking. It provides a better sense of overall sentiment and lessens the impact of a few loud voices so that all participants are more evenly represented.	1/31/2023 7:30 PM
8	In the UK parliament, I guess people yell out affirmations and express disagreement all the time. Fun to watch! Maybe we could have a more orderly system	1/31/2023 4:49 PM
9	There are some TMMs who feel the need to speak well past the point of adding any new ideas, perspectives, or content. I'd prefer to minimize that.	1/31/2023 4:38 PM
10	The amount of time clearing throats (ugh) and "am I on mute?" "sorry I thought I was on mute" "I couldn't find the unmute" "sorry, I'll be brief...." (which they are not), takes about 10% of the whole meeting.	1/31/2023 3:23 PM
11	Another solution to both the above questions will be simply returning to live Town Meeting sessions at town hall, allows members to "read the room" and converse with their neighbors, as opposed to being isolated behind a remote Zoom screen.	1/31/2023 2:58 PM
12	I feel this might intimidate some into not speaking. This is what debate is for - to allow people to express their opinion if debate is open. I can see the merits but feel it could be intimidating	1/31/2023 2:52 PM
13	I like that the moderator makes the speaker list public, and also makes an effort to hear from both sides on controversial topics. It isn't fair when only one side gets to speak because their members are quicker to jump into the speaker queue, or are assigned to the beginning of the list. Town Meeting debate works best when all sides have an opportunity to be heard, and full debate is important to me and how I vote.	1/31/2023 2:24 PM
14	Anything to cut down the time of arguments and the time of the meeting	1/31/2023 2:05 PM
15	I'm finding it increasingly difficult to bear the use of "debate" to be for clarifying questions and or pontificating. It's become very tiresome. By an hour or so in, I feel my brain frying.	1/31/2023 1:57 PM

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16	One benefit of using electronic voting is that I think it reduces peer pressure, which I think is a good thing.	1/31/2023 1:57 PM
17	My answer above re: clarity of debate reflects what I think was a function of both the moderators first year, a few people who took it upon themselves to manipulate the process, and perhaps an effort to elevate inclusiveness even if it distracted from clarity of process.	1/30/2023 7:34 PM
18	How can one make up their mind until all the arguments have been made. I believe that this would stifle the free flow of ideas and thoughts and debate.	1/30/2023 2:08 PM
19	Speaking time should be shortened. People who have recently spoken on an article should be moved down in the queue for the subsequent article.	1/29/2023 8:28 PM
20	Having 'meters' for termination or support of an article is an interesting experiment, but, if you try it, bear in mind that it is very much an experiment. I think there could be unforeseen side effects.	1/29/2023 3:24 PM
21	I think that the applicability of this will be different when we are in-person, and therefore should not be implemented until we know whether or not it is necessary in the in-person context.	1/28/2023 10:45 AM
22	I like the idea of TMMs having a chance to (optionally) indicate support or opposition during debate. But, I would also add "undecided" as a choice. It seems equivalent to standing up in different lines, as is reportedly done in Lexington. I tend to usually be against terminating debate in order to give people a chance to speak without excessive peer pressure not to; but if it seemed like there was overwhelming support for one position, this would inform whether it was an appropriate time to terminate debate (i.e. the vote isn't going to change, anyway).	1/26/2023 1:38 PM
23	A lot of TMM's do not do research before TM and seem to rely on the debate to learn the details of the Articles. Also, there's no way to vet "unbiased" questions. People will use this as a loophole to jump the queue and phrase their argument as a question.	1/25/2023 8:20 PM
24	I think this would be very detrimental. It would make speaking publicly even more intimidating and would serve as a form of bullying. I really hope this is not implemented.	1/25/2023 12:22 PM
25	I felt that some members cut off debate when other points of view had not be heard. I know that extends the time, but there should be more discussion, hearing different points of view. We can cut off the "I agree", but need to hear other ideas. Hard to do, but worth a try.	1/25/2023 9:12 AM
26	These questions assume the use of the sham zoom system to which I object. It's past time to return to the traditional form of debate that once made America great.	1/24/2023 10:30 PM
27	quality of debate in 2022 was the lowest of my over ten years in TM. Abuse of the process (for instance points of order) was rampant and not adequately checked by the Moderator. Also biased questioning of proponents.	1/24/2023 9:12 PM
28	Town Meeting is a deliberation body. They dynamics and shortcomings of Zoom are pushing us towards being a collection of plebiscites. We should resist that trend. If we continue with remote meetings, we should rethink a lot of things. Maybe we need our own committees, and/or pre-meeting exchanges of information, to process things better and arrive prepared.	1/24/2023 4:24 PM
29	1. There needs to be clarity on when proponents of amendments can speak. They should be given time at the beginning to explain and advocate for their amendment, but does this mean they lose their ability to speak on the article in chief or other amendments? 2. In some cases it would be useful to call for votes on specific amendments. 3. In some cases it would be useful to restrict debate to specific amendments. 4. New technology for real-time sense of the meeting polls would have different applications in person or remote. it is difficult to answer questions without knowing which you are considering.	1/24/2023 12:35 PM
30	Encouraging TMMs to voice new issues rather than repeating what others have said was helpful, though not always followed.	1/24/2023 10:18 AM
31	My initial thought that this could only be a good idea to get a "sense of the room". But I suppose it could also be intimidating or make people with minority opinions more reluctant to speak.	1/24/2023 9:55 AM
32	Important for Moderator and committee members not to game the system in this manner	1/24/2023 9:32 AM
33	These two questions are not well worded or explained and I'm not sure what you're getting at. The 2022 meeting had the same people speaking repeatedly, often new TMMs who don't	1/23/2023 9:30 PM

2022 Annual Town Meeting Feedback

understand what's going on, and they slowed down the whole process for everyone else. In effect, they monopolized the debate and the moderator should have limited the repeat speakers.

34	I'd be interested in seeing two or more speaker queues - one for speakers in favor, one for speakers opposed, and one for questions. This would allow for a more balanced debate, and visually signal to other TMMs which direction most speakers are leaning.	1/23/2023 8:49 PM
35	I think this would really confuse the situation even more. Some people might express an opinion just to help sway sentiment, leading to others not speaking up.	1/23/2023 2:56 PM
36	shortening the speaking time would help.	1/23/2023 2:36 PM
37	Some folks are arguing for shorter speaking times, and other forms of limiting live input, as a means of shortening ATM overall. I strongly oppose these proposals. ATM is 3 hours each for 7 - 8 nights. If this is too onerous a time commitment for some people, they should reconsider their roles as TMMs.	1/23/2023 12:57 PM
38	Respectfully, under the new moderators leadership this aspect of last year's town meeting was it real disaster. Thank you for soliciting feedback. We can do better!	1/23/2023 9:40 AM
39	I like these 2 above ideas because they lower the stakes on "calling the question". I like the idea of a "sense of the body" before ending debate. The existing projects is very rigid and can be hard to respond to flexibly, with compromises.	1/23/2023 8:51 AM
40	How about a trial run using fincom report articles?	1/23/2023 7:59 AM
41	I think there is merit in having to listen to the member who has the floor and I fear that by adding another way for members to interact would draw attention away from the speaker.	1/23/2023 7:34 AM
42	It should be carried out online as close to what would happen in person. There isn't a running tally in person, I do not believe, do there shouldn't be on just because it's virtual.	1/22/2023 11:09 PM
43	In my opinion "electronically recorded live sentiment" is a very tricky (and possibly fraught) road to go down. The live sentiment would only tell "how many" people have a strong opinion and I care about the "who" and the "why" at least as much as the how many.	1/22/2023 10:58 PM
44	Hastening a vote - voting to terminate debate when there appear to be many folks who want to continue debate appears unfair. This kind of thing happened more than once during 2022 Town Meeting and was frustrating- I often wanted to hear more opinions/thoughts so I could have a better sense of the issue.	1/22/2023 10:42 PM
45	These are really interesting ideas and I wholeheartedly support thinking about ways to improve the process. I don't know what to think about the second one. Need to think more.	1/22/2023 9:52 PM
46	Appreciate allowing three pro and con speakers on an article to hear both sides.	1/22/2023 9:11 PM
47	I'm concerned about exerting too much influence on debate by pre-voting, but a sense of how many people feel debate is becoming repetitive feels more helpful. My hope is that speakers would make much briefer points or withdraw if they don't have anything new to add.	1/22/2023 9:09 PM
48	For articles that aren't contentious, this might be helpful to give a pulse of the room and save time and reduce the needs for so many speakers. That said, for more contentious articles, I think it would be intimidating for some speakers to speak in the face of widespread opposition. I think the prior question about having some nonbinding sentiment that indicates whether each person wants to terminate debate is adequate enough (rather than knowing where they stand on that article, the audience would know that they believe they have heard enough to make a decision).	1/22/2023 8:52 PM
49	I think it's important for TMM to be able to express their opinions without feeling pressured not to by the majority, however it would be helpful for the moderator to ask speakers after a lot of debate to consider the time and say something only if it offers a new perspective	1/22/2023 8:51 PM
50	a few people talk too much. I, and I can't speak for others, have made up their minds, on many issues, and a lot of "debate" is mostly for people who like to hear the sound of their own voices. Also, when there is a video: we need not replay it, Much, if the meeting is virtual, can be done ahead of time, like the videos. They need not take up the whole TM's time. This was true during many of the Zoning debates.	1/22/2023 8:48 PM
51	It would be great if we could do like a "thumbs up" "great point" "I hadn't thought of that," (I'm	1/22/2023 8:31 PM

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thinking of the emoji/chat options in zoom) so speakers could know that people are listening to what they're saying, but I think putting a non-binding record of our actual votes out before all debate is done would be detrimental to the process.

52	In person, people can tell room sentiment from groans etc. from the audience.	1/22/2023 7:48 PM
53	Debate is dominated by the same few people. Most people don't get the chance to speak at all. About 25 people use up 80% of the speaking time, speak on most things, and speak for too long.	1/22/2023 7:41 PM
54	The debate time was frequently used by individuals who seemed to lack an understanding of the materials that were sent prior to the meeting Perhaps the materials could have a Cliffs Notes that explain in very simple language what the impact of a yes/no vote are would help. I believe this is done for state elections as I recall seeing this on ballots.	1/22/2023 7:39 PM
55	Too confusing to add to debate	1/22/2023 7:33 PM
56	Often times I feel coming into Town Meeting already well-educated about the merits of an article, and am unlikely to hear anything new to change my prior decision as to how I will vote.	1/22/2023 7:28 PM
57	Being able to display an "undecided" or "confused by the debate or speaker/info" or even "confused by the language of the article".	1/22/2023 6:48 PM
58	The process last year clearly evolved from the Moderator making no changes to the speaker order to very clearly making changes to the speaker order. It was a move towards practicality that comes from serving as Moderator. There were many speakers last year who clearly hadn't done their homework, and that was truly disappointing. No one would stand up in front of the hall to admit they hadn't read the materials, but they took time during the online meeting to do so. Things were so slow online that it really started to feel like a waste of the members' time. I would be curious about what other tasks members did during the meeting. Having a terminate-o-meter would be a dangerous thing. The meeting already gets "terminate happy" at times. Something that could lead to prematurely ending debate would be a detriment. Similarly, an ongoing straw poll could lead to prematurely ending debate. I have heard that Lexington makes speakers queue before a pro lectern and a con lectern. I don't oppose that. It could actually help curtail speakers.	1/22/2023 6:45 PM
59	If this was to happen, it should not be the decisive determiner on the issue. The moderator should share the tally, then take a vote.	1/22/2023 6:27 PM
60	There has to be something better than following Robert's Rules.They are archaic, inherently sexist and racist (and by "-ist" I mean the systems of power, not the interpersonal act) and can be twisted by those who can game the processes.	1/22/2023 6:26 PM
61	Keep it as it is and has been. Freedom of Speech is the foundation of Town Meeting. It is not Freedom of Non-Binding Sentiment.	1/22/2023 6:19 PM
62	Main problem last year was that so much time was spent on points of order, going over rules, and voting that the conversation/debate was overshadowed	1/22/2023 6:15 PM
63	During debate, I tend to find questions and answers more useful than statements of support or opposition.	1/22/2023 6:01 PM
64	I really like Lexington's use of a yes, no, and question speaker line. It lets the moderator balance pro and con without having to guess or appear to pick favorites. And it provides useful information to the Meeting about the trend of opinion, and who is thinking what. I believe it helps keep debate time shorter, while no less informative. Could we pilot that in Arlington on one or two nights to see how it goes?	1/22/2023 5:53 PM
65	How can we center marginalized voices? Who gets to speak the most often, to interrupt, to opine during their presentations?	1/22/2023 5:41 PM
66	I think that both of these would have real negative consequences on people exercising their right to speak in the face of knowing that people have made up their minds already or that people don't want to hear more comments. Town Meeting needs to be more inclusive and this seems very exclusive	1/22/2023 5:23 PM
67	I do not like the policy of alternating pro and con speakers, and not letting others who might have another perspective the opportunity to speak	1/22/2023 5:08 PM
68	I think some of these ideas but may not be required if we: 1) gave priority to people that had	1/22/2023 5:07 PM

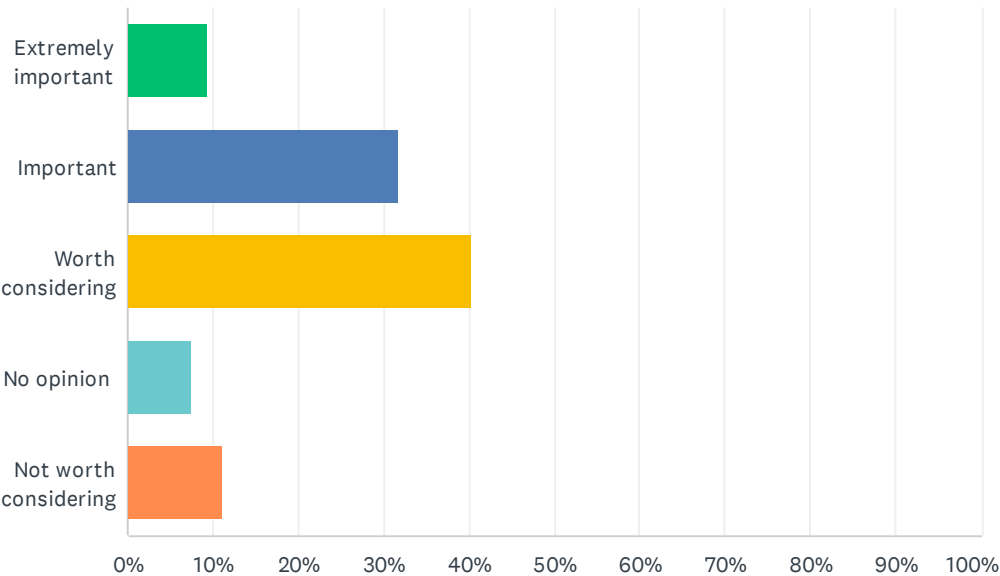
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not spoken yet that night (on any issue) before those that had already spoken. 2) Enforced rule requiring speakers to introduce new points or facts if they wanted to speak.

69	Getting selected to speak appears to be a real crap-shoot. If I have something important to say, then I'd like a chance to say it. I do appreciate the moderator trying to select people from multiple sides of any given issue. But still, I would like to think that my comments matter, and should have more confidence in my ability to get up on the queue before termination than I do.	1/22/2023 5:04 PM
70	IMO last years moderator did a better job of giving more people the opportunity to speak. Prior two years were the same people going on and on	1/22/2023 4:56 PM
71	There are many IT challenges when conducting a meeting such as this via Zoom.	1/22/2023 4:40 PM
72	Last session of Town Meeting was quite frustrating. Doing this online creates an incredibly slow process where so much time is wasted. There has to be a way to move this along.	1/22/2023 4:36 PM
73	Mr Moderator, please don't allow so much discussion about HOW you are moderating. We elected you to make these decisions yourself because we trust your judgment. I know you are trying to be open and transparent but you are allowing way too much backseat driving.	1/22/2023 4:31 PM

Q10 Rate the following factors for their importance to you for determining the order of speakers during debate.Taking speakers in the order in which they requested to speak.

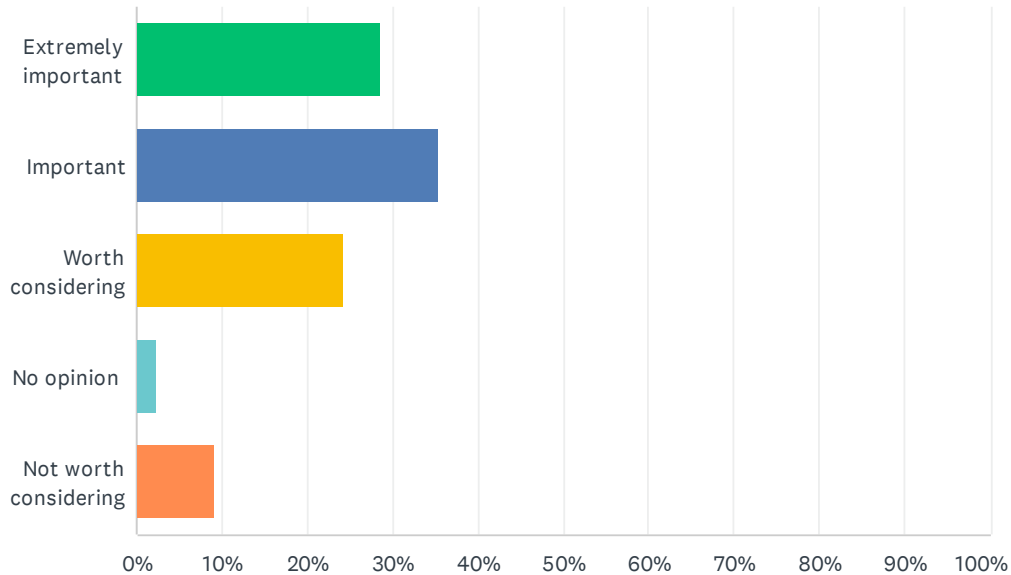
Answered: 161 Skipped: 4



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Extremely important	9.32%	15
Important	31.68%	51
Worth considering	40.37%	65
No opinion	7.45%	12
Not worth considering	11.18%	18
TOTAL		161

Q11 Balance between speakers in support of a motion, speakers opposed, and speakers with generally unbiased questions.

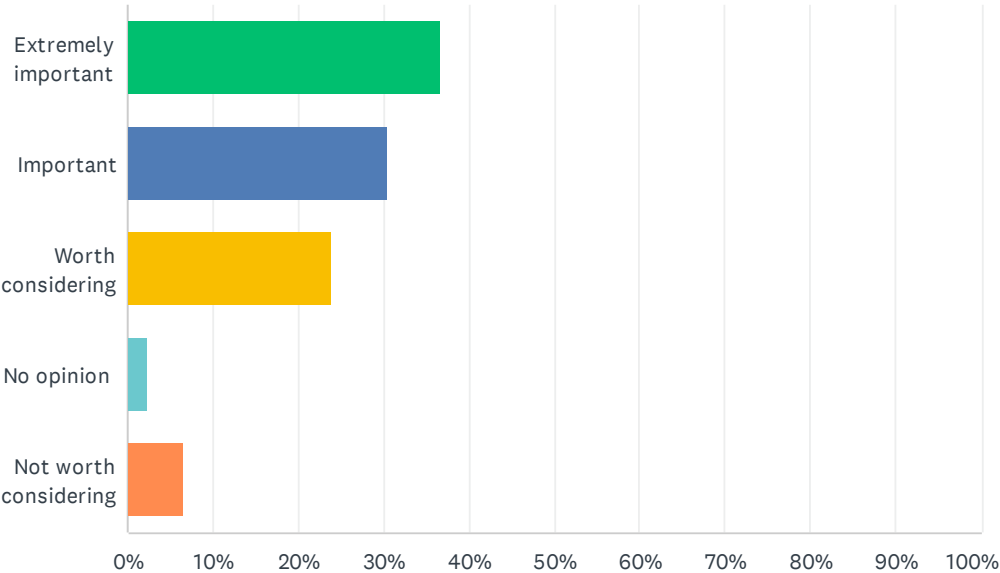
Answered: 164 Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Extremely important	28.66%	47
Important	35.37%	58
Worth considering	24.39%	40
No opinion	2.44%	4
Not worth considering	9.15%	15
TOTAL		164

Q12 Balance between those who speak often at Town Meeting and those who speak rarely.

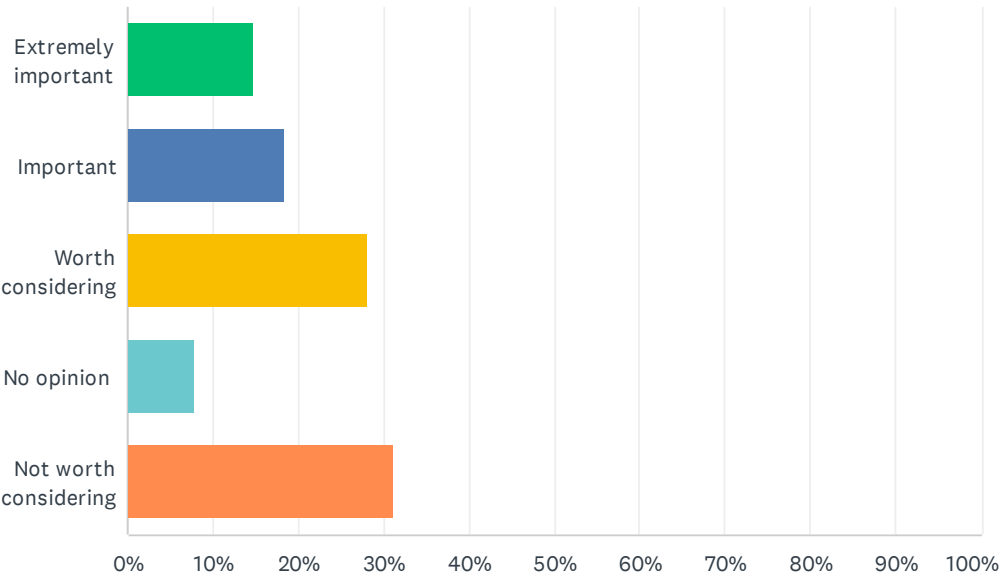
Answered: 164 Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Extremely important	36.59%	60
Important	30.49%	50
Worth considering	23.78%	39
No opinion	2.44%	4
Not worth considering	6.71%	11
TOTAL		164

Q13 Balance between newer Members and longer-serving Members.

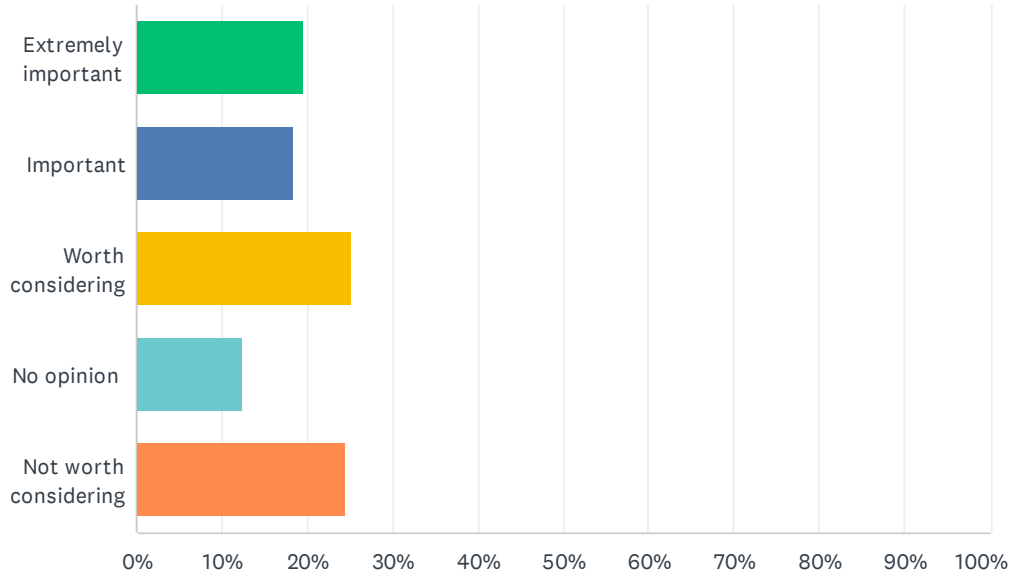
Answered: 164 Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES		RESPONSES	
Extremely important		14.63%	24
Important		18.29%	30
Worth considering		28.05%	46
No opinion		7.93%	13
Not worth considering		31.10%	51
TOTAL			164

Q14 Demographic diversity of speakers, e.g. gender, race, and homeowners/renters.

Answered: 163 Skipped: 2



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Extremely important	19.63%	32
Important	18.40%	30
Worth considering	25.15%	41
No opinion	12.27%	20
Not worth considering	24.54%	40
TOTAL		163

Q15 Please share any further thoughts about determining the order of speakers.

Answered: 73 Skipped: 92

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	I think that a balance of perspectives is good so I would like it if diversity of speakers happened organically, but I worry about the amount of disclosure, process, and resentment that would be required to make it happen by mandate.	2/11/2023 11:37 AM
2	We want a diversity of opinions but not false equivalence; if 50 speakers have someone overlapping reasons they are in favor of an article and 5 oppose we want to hear some opposition but is very misleading if we hear from 3 in favor and three against. It's good to hear from people with expertise and days and people who aren't afraid to be politically brave, I feel we are headed to knees-jerk voting I think there are people who have to express their opinion and speak frequently even when they have nothing to add and they should not continue to be called upon and die Long standing members who have a lot to add who should be called on often. And I	2/6/2023 3:26 AM
3	I think the order of speakers issue might have to be handled a little differently depending on whether it is a virtual or in-person meeting. e.g. with virtual controlling the order based on the order of requesting to speak would be easier than in-person. While in general I think all the considerations are important it would be tricky for the moderator to take them all into consideration - if there's anyway to find a balance that would be preferable to me	2/5/2023 4:27 PM
4	What matters is that the Moderator clearly explain to the meeting how speakers are selected. The "how" can of course change from article to article, and even during discussion of an article.	2/4/2023 8:44 PM
5	while it is always useful to hear from people who understand a given topic more than I do, I think when someone who rarely speaks rises, we should prioritize them. For someone who rarely speaks rises, it must be a matter of great import to them.	2/3/2023 3:28 PM
6	I don't tend to favor ideas that would limit speakers based on their longevity of serving or on the fact that they had spoken more often. Some people speak more often because they are more prepared and have more helpful arguments to share.	2/1/2023 4:09 PM
7	First come first serve. Keep it simple and unbiased. Otherwise who chooses order determines the order of speakers and that could lead to bias, intended or not.	2/1/2023 12:58 PM
8	Facilitating diverse viewpoints is a wonderful goal and will improve the experience and quality of the session.	1/31/2023 7:30 PM
9	Could be VERY tricky, though, as people's gender, race, religion, or other pertinent characteristics might not be easy to determine	1/31/2023 4:49 PM
10	I'd like speakers to be far more respectful of the meeting's time.	1/31/2023 4:38 PM
11	The biggest problem is that a small number of speakers get th most air time and add very little to inform or move the conversation forward.	1/31/2023 3:36 PM
12	To the question about balance of speakers...I do not want a balance if it's always the same few speaking "against". I do not want a "balance" of opinion if it's 100 speakers vs. the same 3--- that's not a balance.	1/31/2023 3:23 PM
13	The problem with using any metric for speakers besides the order in which they raised their hands -- eg, support/oppose the article, new/old members, gender/race -- is that those personal attributes are very difficult to measure in the immediate flow of debate, especially via Zoom.	1/31/2023 2:58 PM
14	If this selecting of speakers out of order to ensure both sides are heard can be done consistently and fairly, I would agree but it assumes a lot. Assumes the moderator knows what side a given member is representing. Is there a way for a person to declare "for or against" when raising their hand to speak?	1/31/2023 2:52 PM

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15	It was tough hearing the same people talk over and over again!	1/31/2023 2:35 PM
16	I am frustrated that the same people feel the need to speak on seemingly every issue. I would like the moderator to discourage this, by reminding Members that their vote is recorded for every vote, and they don't need to speak out on every article. It often feels like 3-4 speakers hijack the entire meeting. I like hearing from new voices.	1/31/2023 2:24 PM
17	Moderator should feel free to include speakers who have not spoken up previously.	1/31/2023 2:24 PM
18	I really like the idea of prioritizing speakers who have not yet spoken at Town Meeting or have spoken rarely! This seems easily doable by keeping a tally of who has spoken.	1/31/2023 2:18 PM
19	Please only let someone speak no more than two times per evening	1/31/2023 2:05 PM
20	I definitely do not think you should attempt to order speakers by gender or race or any of those factors. That's not a good idea. Just do it by order of who fit in the queue first.	1/31/2023 1:57 PM
21	It is important to get a mix of pro and con speakers from all spectrums.	1/30/2023 2:08 PM
22	I want to hear from as many different speakers as possible not the same people over and over again.	1/29/2023 8:28 PM
23	A visible queue in signup order makes sense. People should also be encouraged to remove themselves (or curb their remarks to 'I agree with X') if another speaker(s) has already made their points.	1/29/2023 3:24 PM
24	I recommend 3 queues: pro, con, questions	1/26/2023 9:37 PM
25	I think the fairest way is letting speakers speak in order (with caveats) but also feel the Moderator should have some discretion. And, some speakers (who speak too often with nothing productive to add to the debate — we know that when we hear it — should not be called on many times per night; whereas other speakers who speak often, with valuable, informed insights, should not be penalized just because they want to speak often. It's tricky but I think the Moderator is generally able to make these judgements. I think trying to choose speakers based on gender, race, etc is fraught... Certainly not based on balancing homeowners/renters...how do you even know that about a person, anyway? Just try to make sure the environment is welcoming and that, to the extent possible, people are given time through an equitable, albeit imperfect, process. To me, shutting down debate just because many TMMs are tired of the discussion or it's the end of the night is not reasonable. If an issue is important enough to many TMMs to speak to it, then give it enough time. But, it would be great if the Moderator could control certain individuals who blatantly monopolize TM's time (e.g. with questions about the process that they should know the answers to by now). I can think of only one or two people who do this, but restricting how often they are called-on seems reasonable to me. And, if they approach the Moderator later to ask why they weren't called on, perhaps they can receive some constructive feedback.	1/26/2023 1:38 PM
26	It doesn't make sense to prioritize the order in which speakers signed up since that's either determined by how aggressively they're using a web form or how aggressively they're physically getting in line, and in either case that's a biasing factor.	1/26/2023 7:46 AM
27	If the debate is on a heated question, "Terminators" should not be allowed to prolong the agony by forcing votes too early. The Moderator should reject their motion. If one side feels they have the votes, they won't want more speakers to possibly sway Undecideds against them.	1/25/2023 8:20 PM
28	I would not include renters vs homeowners. I believe TMM already represent both.	1/25/2023 12:22 PM
29	I believe that the Moderator should exercise some discretion in the choice. Thus a strict order based on a formula or publicly available speaker list does not serve us well.	1/24/2023 9:12 PM
30	I think the number one consideration (though not the only one) should be, "What does Town Meeting need to hear to make this decision?"	1/24/2023 4:24 PM
31	I understand the importance of hearing all voices, it becomes tiresome and tedious when people are just repeating the same points that others have stated. This makes for an unnecessarily long meeting.	1/24/2023 3:48 PM
32	1. Publishing the order that people requested to speak is a bad idea. It sets up expectations, forcing the moderator to explain his reasons for deviating. 2. Order of speakers can only be determined by the information available to the moderator. Is that information subject to FOIA?	1/24/2023 12:35 PM

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How do you intend to get information on race, gender, homeowner status? How would you ensure accuracy? 3. It would be most useful to balance proponent/opposition to the article in chief, as well as each amendment, but that information is hard to get. 4. Any system will be manipulated.

33	This is hard. It's important to hear all sides of the issue and from a diverse population. I feel like more discussion/questions would have been helpful on a few of the articles.	1/24/2023 10:18 AM
34	Thanks for thinking about these issues. Challenging to make it fair and balanced across many metrics. Since some of the judgement is subjective, or maybe difficult to react to in real time, I imagine it will be tricky to implement. I'm willing to give the moderator more discretion, but hope that it is transparent.	1/24/2023 9:55 AM
35	This relates to the inherent art of the Moderator's responsibility.	1/24/2023 9:32 AM
36	It seems like a randomizing system for hot topics would be appropriate, at least for the first few people	1/24/2023 9:03 AM
37	It shouldn't be a race to hit the button or to raise their hand. The moderator should have the discretion to select people who don't monopolize the debate.	1/23/2023 9:30 PM
38	Most of these would slow down the process. The purpose of TM is not to debate the issues. It is to make decisions.	1/23/2023 8:14 PM
39	Each TMM is an elected representative of his or her precinct. Speakers selection as speaker on any specific topic should only be based on the order of their request. Other subjective issues such as time served in TM, home ownership, race, gender, religion, political affiliation, etc. should have no role in speaker selection.	1/23/2023 3:11 PM
40	I would prefer a format where the primary proponent speaks first, followed by someone speaking on behalf of the opposition. The ideal situation would be for all the primary talking points to be in front of the body at the outset. Also, there appeared to be actual electronic barriers for some people to get into the speaking queue. If we continue to meet via Zoom, it would be helpful to find a way to open the queue for everyone at once (and have the system not crash).	1/23/2023 3:07 PM
41	It seems to me it would be difficult for the Moderator to know the backgrounds of all potential speakers in order to determine order based on some of the above characteristics. Is that realistic? Seems bound to create even more problems.	1/23/2023 2:56 PM
42	I really like the questions about balance. That is a good idea.	1/23/2023 1:03 PM
43	It's important that the meeting hear from both sides in a debate and that they get a variety of perspectives. I would support a bias toward hearing from members with questions as opposed to those repeating arguments already made.	1/23/2023 10:01 AM
44	Don't let the same loud voices dominate the debate!	1/23/2023 9:40 AM
45	I think the first filter is order of raising hands, but then people should have one shot to talk until everyone else has had a chance. Doing the pro/con/unbiased list is an interesting idea worth a try. I support trying that.	1/23/2023 8:51 AM
46	Requiring speakers to confirm that they have read the reporting body's report to town meeting and associated pending amendments and exhibits	1/23/2023 7:59 AM
47	I would be interested in putting the next speaker "on-deck" I think the drama of "who's going to be next" heightens some peoples cares about the order of speakers. And having the next person already pointed out may help with that. I also think that it could help tremendously with the preparedness of speakers. It can be difficult to go from "sitting and waiting for a long time" to "ready to speak" and so giving speakers the heads up to gather their final thoughts might improve the quality of debate.	1/22/2023 10:58 PM
48	The balancing of pro and con views runs the risk of presenting a debate that makes it look like there are similarly sized camps on both sides when there really aren't.	1/22/2023 9:52 PM
49	Proponents of an article are easier to identify as submitted warrant article. Opponents are harder to properly identify especially ones that are best able to articulate the reasons not to vote for an article.	1/22/2023 9:11 PM
50	A certain sense of fairness by taking speakers in a recognizable order is important. But taking	1/22/2023 9:09 PM

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Questions, Pro, and Con speakers in their time stamp order could help the debate from feeling so random or repetitive.

51	Last year the same people spoke over and over which doesn't feel in the spirit of town meeting. I don't mind for some people to weigh in on numerous articles, but a small handful weighed in on most articles and taking speakers in the order they requested to speak seems to have no merit when it is an online race to click a button to speak first. I'd much rather consider a balance of those in favor, those opposed and those with general questions and spreading out who's voice is heard and a diversity of speaker types over who clicked "speak" first!	1/22/2023 8:52 PM
52	As above, allow ending debate much quicker, like having a button that people can push and when it reaches 2/3 the debate should end.	1/22/2023 8:48 PM
53	I think it would be great if people could submit their desire to speak ahead of time, rather than relying on the speed of the click online. That way it gives the moderator some time to think about who has spoken a lot already, finding speakers to speak to all sides of an issue, and it might help to have folks prioritize the issues where they can add new perspectives or value to the conversation.	1/22/2023 8:31 PM
54	Debate should be sharply limited. Very little is actually debated on the merits. It is dominated by opponents who raise repeated objections without changing minds, or by people who didn't bother to do their research ahead of time. I suspect that very few minds of informed people are changed during debate.	1/22/2023 7:41 PM
55	Given the distribution of speakers there is an opportunity to hear from more voices. I'm not sure if the system can force people to talk, but having an overall tracker that pushes frequent speakers lower in the order would help. This may also keep superfluous comments to a minimum as the more talkative members may 'save' their comments for articles for which they truly feel passionate.	1/22/2023 7:39 PM
56	I'm looking to hear new information, so as a diverse a range of opinions is preferable.	1/22/2023 7:28 PM
57	There was one amendment made and then a motion to terminate debate so that there was no debate on that amendment. I think that was a problem because many members did not understand the debate and believed there was no opposition to the amendment.	1/22/2023 7:17 PM
58	Perhaps speakers should annotate for speaking For, Against, Clarity (perhaps some notation could be developed for POC or marginalized groupings/Renters/less represented groups to speak.	1/22/2023 6:48 PM
59	This is a really difficult thing to balance. Each member could have a set amount of time to speak over the entire meeting, which would force a more broad perspective. However, there are longer serving members who bring institutional knowledge, and depriving us of that because they have been generous in providing that perspective doesn't seem right. For the other criteria noted above, it feels intrusive to set up such a system, but if it helps to elucidate various perspectives, that could be helpful. It might be that using those criteria could be limited to bylaw debates, but not as much for budget items. The criteria could be used in a limited fashion based on the topics at hand.	1/22/2023 6:45 PM
60	Speakers who are constantly speaking should after all new speakers have had a chance to.	1/22/2023 6:27 PM
61	There needs to be a better way to hear more voices of our community and representatives. All too often, louder folks (usually cis straight white dudes) drown out any opportunity to hear from those that may come with different lived experiences.	1/22/2023 6:26 PM
62	Keep the same chronological order we use. Giving some speakers preference over others despite being a protected class sounds like discrimination.	1/22/2023 6:19 PM
63	Demographic diversity seems really hard(and potentially time consuming).	1/22/2023 6:15 PM
64	See you earlier comments favoring a trial of Lexington's 3-queue system.	1/22/2023 5:53 PM
65	While I support these considerations, I think that the metrics would be hard to "enforce" outside of broad profiling. AND - there aren't any unbiased questions or "opinions" - to assert this is already controlling how the debate will be framed. This question assumes a simple binary of pro-versus-con "debate", rather than generative discussion. I wonder what kind of yearly training and conversation (that isn't box checking and formulaic, but builds TM's capacity to discuss, to disagree, to collectively weigh viewpoints outside of their own immediate experiences and concerns) could be provided to ALL TMM's (individually and	1/22/2023 5:41 PM

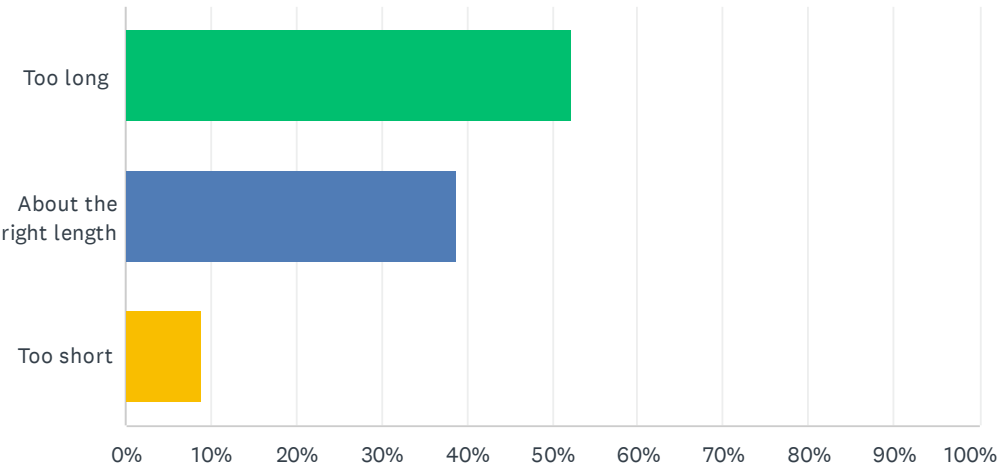
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collectively) about bias, understanding one's own intersectionality, white supremacy and racialization, etc... Discussing skills such as learning how to step back and create space, especially if you are already in power on multiple committees, the select board, etc... How can we procedurally disrupt biased language, racism, misogyny, etc? Can it be a Point of Personal Privilege if I want to speak in support of, say, a racist or misogynist comment to/about someone else? Can we publish lists after each meeting, or each week, that lists who spoke and for how long in debate? Can that also come into play in determining who gets to speak first/most the next week? Can we develop practices (rather than policies) that center marginalized voices first?

66	Same people spoke all th time, rambled on and then debate was cut off. Terrible	1/22/2023 5:27 PM
67	I was very pleased with the moderator's decision to hew in general to the speaking list but to elevate new speakers ahead of those who had already spoken often. During my first year of TM it didn't take long for me to feel very frustrated by how much certain people talked and took up air space while others waiting to speak never had a chance. They tended to be white males as well as people who are well known players in the system. This just serves to make people feel that they don't belong there.	1/22/2023 5:23 PM
68	Unless you determine how the Diversity of TM speakers reflects the towns actual diversity, I think it's unwise to arbitrarily allow speakers based on your bias. You don't know who is wealthy vs poor or on a fixed income, who rents or owns, who has kids in school or not, etc.	1/22/2023 5:08 PM
69	I think peopl people that speak often should be deprioritized In the speakers queue.	1/22/2023 5:07 PM
70	All speakers voices are important, even the old white homeowners. Everyone should have a chance to contribute; this is a false choice you're presenting.	1/22/2023 5:04 PM
71	People who may not be as versed in IT are at a disadvantage. Personally, I preferred the onsite meeting even though I work in IT and certainly am computer literate.	1/22/2023 4:40 PM
72	The same speakers over and over - many of us begin to tune out. We may not have the same experience or knowledge of Town business and it creates a situation where these same speakers seem to dominate all discussion.	1/22/2023 4:36 PM
73	Some new members have been speaking just to express general lack of preparation. "I don't even know what we're talking about here." Please reinforce the expectation that all members will arrive at TM fully prepared.	1/22/2023 4:31 PM

Q16 Debate at Town Meeting is generally:

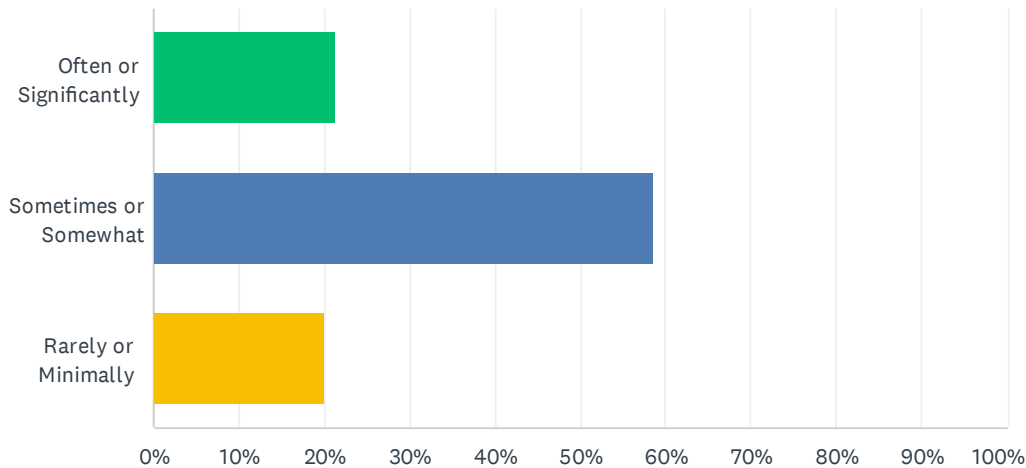
Answered: 157 Skipped: 8



ANSWER CHOICES		RESPONSES	
Too long		52.23%	82
About the right length		38.85%	61
Too short		8.92%	14
TOTAL			157

Q17 Debate at Town Meeting influences my vote:

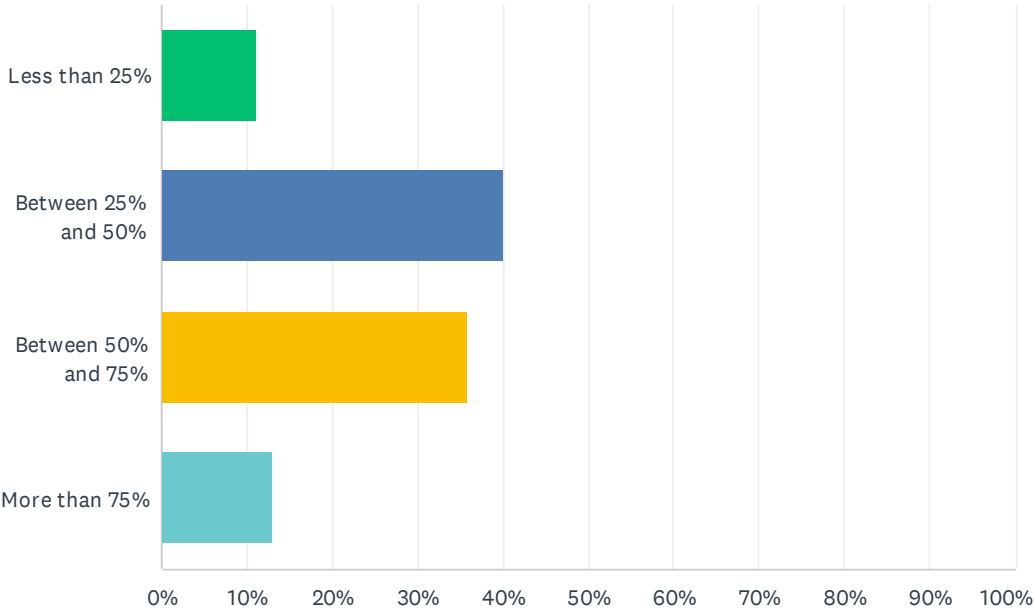
Answered: 164 Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Often or Significantly	21.34%	35
Sometimes or Somewhat	58.54%	96
Rarely or Minimally	20.12%	33
TOTAL		164

Q18 The percentage of Town Meeting Members that I feel are sufficiently prepared in their remarks at Town Meeting is:

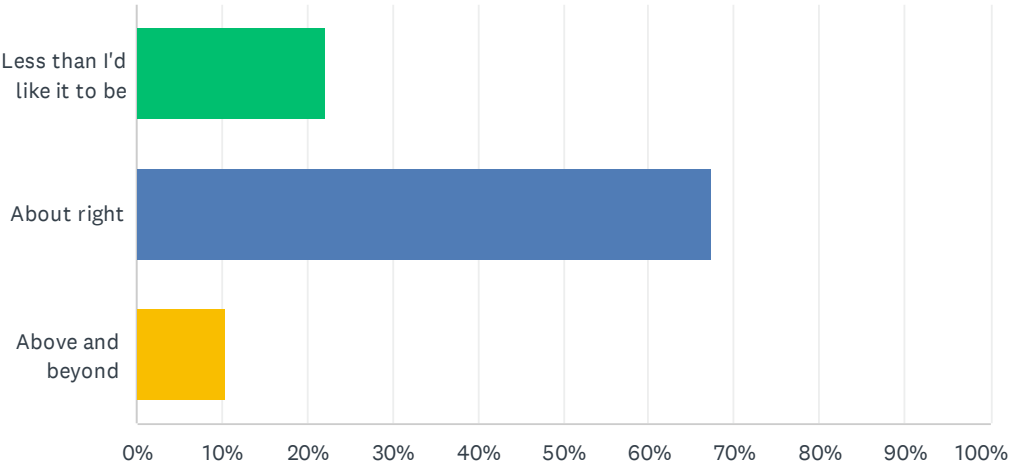
Answered: 162 Skipped: 3



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Less than 25%	11.11%	18
Between 25% and 50%	40.12%	65
Between 50% and 75%	35.80%	58
More than 75%	12.96%	21
TOTAL		162

Q19 I feel that my own level of preparedness for speaking or voting on issues at Town Meeting is:

Answered: 162 Skipped: 3



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Less than I'd like it to be	22.22%	36
About right	67.28%	109
Above and beyond	10.49%	17
TOTAL		162

Q20 Please share any further thoughts about the quality of debate.

Answered: 65 Skipped: 100

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	People who have a good background or history should be called on more together with people who don't speak much	2/6/2023 3:26 AM
2	Again this question is dependent on the virtual/in-person model. Since we've had virtual town meeting I think the debate has been too long because people feel comfortable speaking up virtually rather than in-person.	2/5/2023 4:27 PM
3	Moderator could be quicker to call out speakers for rehashing points that have already been made, and for drifting off topic (scope).	2/4/2023 8:44 PM
4	Sometimes, a person hears something so egregious during debate, that they have no choice but to rise. That they do not have 'properly prepared words' does not, nor should it, lessen the impact or value of those words.	2/3/2023 3:28 PM
5	I would probably always at that I am less prepared than I'd like because there is so much to know and it's impossible to greet to all of it. Especially if reports come out last minute. One thing I do recommend though is for town meeting members to go to as many of the hearings in the warrant articles as possible (Or watch the recorded videos) as they help to understand the warrant articles more deeply before town meeting.	2/1/2023 12:18 PM
6	People want to hear themselves talk	2/1/2023 7:55 AM
7	I skipped the question about length of debate is because it varies. Certain high impact items deserve extended debate as long as it's substantive and non-repetitive. Others with less impact should be shorter, e.g., a street naming. I know it's tough to create objective priority tiers, but patience and time get eaten up by silly debates while items like zoning can be rushed.	1/31/2023 7:30 PM
8	Most members don't speak, so it's hard to guess their preparedness	1/31/2023 4:49 PM
9	Too many speakers are responding "not within the scope of topics. Nice to be polite and give them a chance to come around, but pulling the plug is fine too.	1/31/2023 3:36 PM
10	"prepared speakers" is about 100%. "prepared for debate" is less...it doesn't seem like many do the pre-read.	1/31/2023 3:23 PM
11	Frustration about the long duration of Town Meeting each year is fair, but is just as related to the high number of articles (75 or 85 last session) as to the number of speakers per issue.	1/31/2023 2:58 PM
12	It is frustrating that many TMMs do not read the materials provided and repeatedly ask questions already addressed therein. Asking Dept Heads to explain issues that are not relevant or that have not been asked previously are a waste of TM time and this should be mentioned to those who do this. Questions are fine but this past TM a LOT of time was wasted with this. If you are a TMM it is your responsibility to read the Warrant, call Dept Heads prior with questions and come prepared. This unpreparedness is a big problem and TMMs should commit to being prepared.	1/31/2023 2:52 PM
13	Prepared remarks with a length limit (bullet points!) should be actively encouraged.	1/31/2023 2:24 PM
14	I think it would be good to limit comments to new perspectives, asking people not to repeat points that have already been made.	1/31/2023 2:18 PM
15	There are too many town meeting members! We should cut the number. It's exhausting.	1/31/2023 1:57 PM
16	I think debate in the remote meetings has been cut short too often.	1/31/2023 1:57 PM
17	There are to many speakers who are just stream of conscious talking without any preparation of remarks. this is a total waste of our time.	1/30/2023 2:08 PM
18	Points of order must be strictly managed and be real 'points of order', not used as a priority	1/29/2023 3:24 PM

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	queue for the speaker's views.	
19	I think that most TMMs approach issues thoughtfully and, even if they are not experts on a topic or had enough time to study it, try to admit that and then speak to why they care about it.	1/26/2023 1:38 PM
20	Often remarks get repetitive and on most articles don't bring up new data or evidence that is likely to change people's opinions.	1/26/2023 7:46 AM
21	The town is quite polarized at this point. The debate will be ugly, but people need to be heard.	1/25/2023 8:20 PM
22	I wish articles were summarized in common language with pros and cons suggested before TM begins. I find out information on articles through the Arlington List/Facebook and that is usually very biased and not always accurate. We need easy to find and understand information on each article.	1/25/2023 12:22 PM
23	Please air different points of view. EG discussion of landscaping contractor helpful, wanted to ask questions about plastic water bottles, and the whole zoning thing -- maybe a separate forum for debate outside of TM?	1/25/2023 9:12 AM
24	One thing that would be beneficial: if members had written materials. I think many of us underestimate the cognitive burden of digesting complex information online.	1/24/2023 4:24 PM
25	One of the more useful parts of debate is members asking questions to be answered by town officials or others. This creates a problem with time limits because it takes time to come to the microphone or be activated on zoom. Also, the answers are not always responsive to the questions. Occasionally I feel the person answering is trying to run down the clock of the member asking the question. The moderator should have the ability to grant more time (without a vote) in those circumstances.	1/24/2023 12:35 PM
26	Trolling should be tightly controlled.	1/24/2023 10:36 AM
27	I'd like an easier way to ask clarifying questions during debate- perhaps a way to submit in writing rather than wait in que as discussion moves to other topics.	1/24/2023 10:18 AM
28	Lots of articles, whether on or off the consent agenda, are pretty routine. But for others that are not clear, I find the discussion very helpful. I usually vote not to terminate debate, unless it seems like the usual suspects are all contributing their usual arguments. The reminder that with 250 people in the room, each minute that a speaker is talking is taking up 4 person hours is helpful and persuasive;)	1/24/2023 9:55 AM
29	Quality of debate adversely affected by the VIP Enclosure which the Moderator has in the current Format. TMMs are unaware of who is advising the Moderator in real time. This lack of transparency negatively impacts the democratic process and violates the Enclosure and MA Town Meeting protocols.	1/24/2023 9:32 AM
30	See above. Too many new people who don't know what they're talking about.	1/23/2023 9:30 PM
31	TM members should go into town meeting knowing how they are going to vote on 90%+ of the articles. If they have questions, they can ask officials prior to the meeting.	1/23/2023 8:14 PM
32	The quantity and quality of debate for 2022 was high. I thought that the primary problem last year was the quantity and quality of the warrant articles.	1/23/2023 3:07 PM
33	It depends on the issue at hand... some debates go on too long, but sometimes that is important... hard to predict or set a rigid length for debate.	1/23/2023 2:56 PM
34	10 meeting members who have strong positions and have communicated via email statements in advance of the meeting should not be given priority speaking time.	1/23/2023 9:40 AM
35	Often goes too long. I loved the change to checking in after 20 minutes of debate. That was brilliant. I feel that preparation and succinctness and original ideas is about 50%.	1/23/2023 8:51 AM
36	Higher hurdle to take articles off of the consent agenda	1/23/2023 7:59 AM
37	I try only to speak when I am prepared and feel strongly about an issue, or if I am unclear on what is currently being asked of us.	1/23/2023 7:34 AM
38	I have no problem with lengthy overall debate, especially when the speakers are prepared, cogent and concise. The quality of debate suffers (and the debate begins to feel long) when speakers are unprepared and/or feel that they should offer their opinion on every matter under	1/22/2023 10:58 PM

2022 Annual Town Meeting Feedback

consideration. I suspect that much of what made debate last year feel unproductive or lengthy came about as the result of a very short list of speakers.

39	I didn't respond about the length of debate at Town Meeting - sometimes it seems too short and sometimes can go on for a long time. But I often learn from various perspectives of other TMMs.	1/22/2023 10:42 PM
40	On many questions, debate has given me important insights. However, many of the longest debates (usually around housing) did not offer much important insight and felt like a waste of time. Before getting in the speaking queue, I think about the fact that every minute of time that I speak is 250 minutes of town meeting member time. Whatever I say has to be worth that time. I believe most people (75%+) also think this way, but the 25% who do not take up a ton of time. While I think a lot of the remarks are very useful and prepared well, the opposite happens enough times that it is frustrating. This is especially the case for those who speak often at town meeting. I think those who don't often speak and may offer a different perspective should get the chance to speak.	1/22/2023 10:17 PM
41	I suppose even the wildly unprepared and uninformed have the right to speak. All part of the process. Only way to fix that is to have better members.	1/22/2023 9:52 PM
42	Procedural and voting issues with remote town meeting slowed down town meeting more unnecessarily than longer winded debate. Waiting for people to vote on terminating debate or other non warrant article votes was more frustrating than prolonged debate.	1/22/2023 9:11 PM
43	Debate isn't necessarily too long, but it can be repetitive with similar points made over and over. The biggest issue is addressing misinformation. People with strong feelings often assert things as true and that's frustrating. Debate informs my vote rarely because I believe I should come prepared to vote. I remain open to learning something new, but I won't rely on debate to fairly capture a complex issue.	1/22/2023 9:09 PM
44	The people answering questions seemed very prepared as did the speakers that started out each article. A large number of TMM's seemed to not have read the materials ahead of time close enough. I don't mind ppl asking questions - and some of the material is confusing or not totally clear to someone not as deeply connected to government/planning, but there was a lot of wasted time on questions where answers were clearly in the materials.	1/22/2023 8:52 PM
45	Sometimes if it is a zoning issue I am not sufficiently prepared. I think the planning dept or someone should make more of an effort to explain proposed zoning changes to the community	1/22/2023 8:51 PM
46	see above	1/22/2023 8:48 PM
47	I do a lot of prep work at home, but I do like to hear from the people who propose issues especially so they can answer questions. It'd be great if we could submit questions ahead of time rather than have to ask them live.	1/22/2023 8:31 PM
48	It's difficult to answer whether the debate is too long or not, as it varied a great deal for each article. There were a number of articles that had too much repetition in the speakers.	1/22/2023 8:28 PM
49	A private forum with all articles posted that allow non-anonymous, threaded conversation would be ideal. Preferably open from day one through the whole term so we can discuss asynchronous to the meeting time.	1/22/2023 7:54 PM
50	People asking questions for more information is more important than opinions without any new information.	1/22/2023 7:48 PM
51	As I said above, it is dominated by just a few people, who need to speak on everything. We should consider the ability of any one person to control how the meeting spends its time. For example, frivolous articles were removed from the consent agenda. If we're going to use a straw poll during debate, maybe require 25% informal support to remove a No Action article from the consent agenda.	1/22/2023 7:41 PM
52	It was clear that some speakers had not read the materials and some even said so. That was very disappointing. Some of the debates were good but others were untethered from an understanding of the warrant article or the facts. And many of the points of order were not that.	1/22/2023 7:17 PM
53	Some issues are complex in areas that I am not well grounded in-but that is true of everyone!	1/22/2023 6:48 PM
54	I find debate is often too limited, but it takes too long. This is exacerbated online. It is really helpful to have several people speak to an article in a deliberate and informative fashion.	1/22/2023 6:45 PM

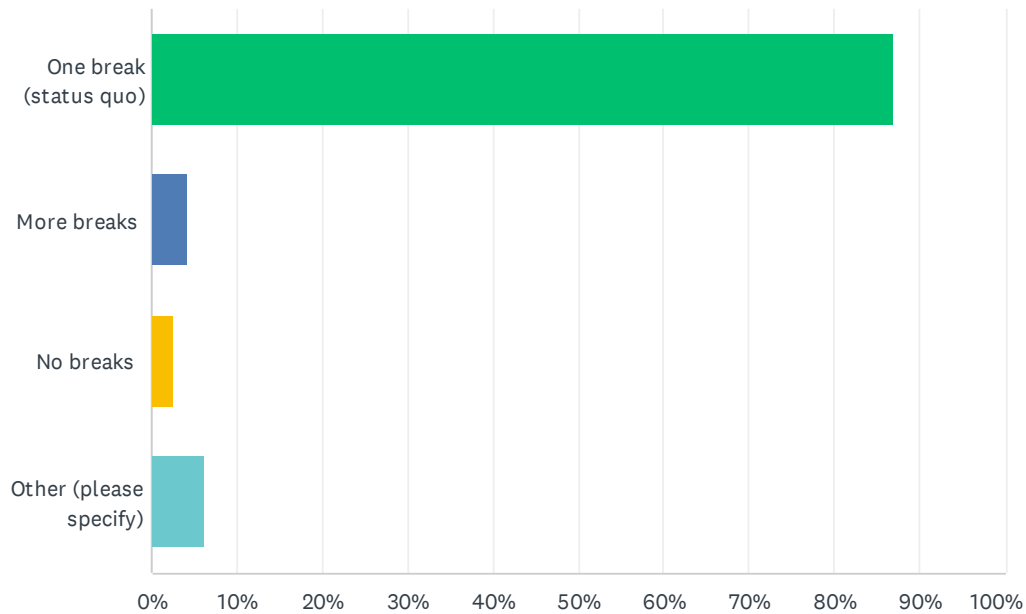
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Online, there was a lot of rambling. As I noted before, there was a surprising number of speakers last year who prefaced their remarks by saying they were unprepared. You did the work of getting elected, so do the work to serve. No excuse.

55	The rule of order must be enforced so that those well versed in them don't control the debate. The moderator must be willing to terminate a speaker if they are out of order. This must be done immediately!	1/22/2023 6:27 PM
56	Too often you have the same voices ramble for time on end, not furthering anything or adding any value to the discourse. It mainly serves as a soap box for fragile white dudes to hear themselves talk. There is also folks who don't even put in a minimal amount of effort to read available details around articles, and waste time discussing points that have already been documented.	1/22/2023 6:26 PM
57	Equal opportunity to speak is for all - regardless of strength of argument, intellect, or public speaking ability. We should not be ruled only by the Intelligentsia.	1/22/2023 6:19 PM
58	As indicated earlier I miss the debates. Any change that emphasizes procedure over just letting people speak would be unwelcome to me....and would frankly eventually drive me off Town Meeting.	1/22/2023 6:15 PM
59	Most of the problems come from repeat speakers who are abusing points of order and the moderators good nature. If we read that in, they would be less need to worry about balancing speakers. I do sincerely wish that we limited ordinary debate to 3 minutes, providing longer periods for main motion presentations and substantial amendments/substitutes	1/22/2023 5:53 PM
60	I have no way to ascertain how "prepared" TMM's are as a percentage of the whole body - I assume this question is being asked to gauge how members' PERCEPTIONS trend?	1/22/2023 5:41 PM
61	Town meeting starts too late and then runs over. Then debates get cut because people are tired and need to get up for work	1/22/2023 5:27 PM
62	I get frustrated by people who clearly haven't read the reports we get to educate ourselves about what we are voting on. I make sure to attend all the warrant article hearings leading up to TM so that I know the pros and cons of each. As a result, I come to the meeting with specific ideas about how I will vote. Sometimes this changes due to debate but not usually.	1/22/2023 5:23 PM
63	The biggest issue detracting from quality of debate is repeat speakers crowding out new voices.	1/22/2023 5:07 PM
64	I keep my powder dry and only seek to speak if I have a very well developed argument. This is important to me (and I am a professional speaker.)	1/22/2023 5:04 PM
65	People should not simply reiterate a previous argument - if they feel their opinion is that respected, simply say you support an article rather than endless repetition of the same comments.	1/22/2023 4:40 PM

Q21 During each Town Meeting session there should be:

Answered: 161 Skipped: 4

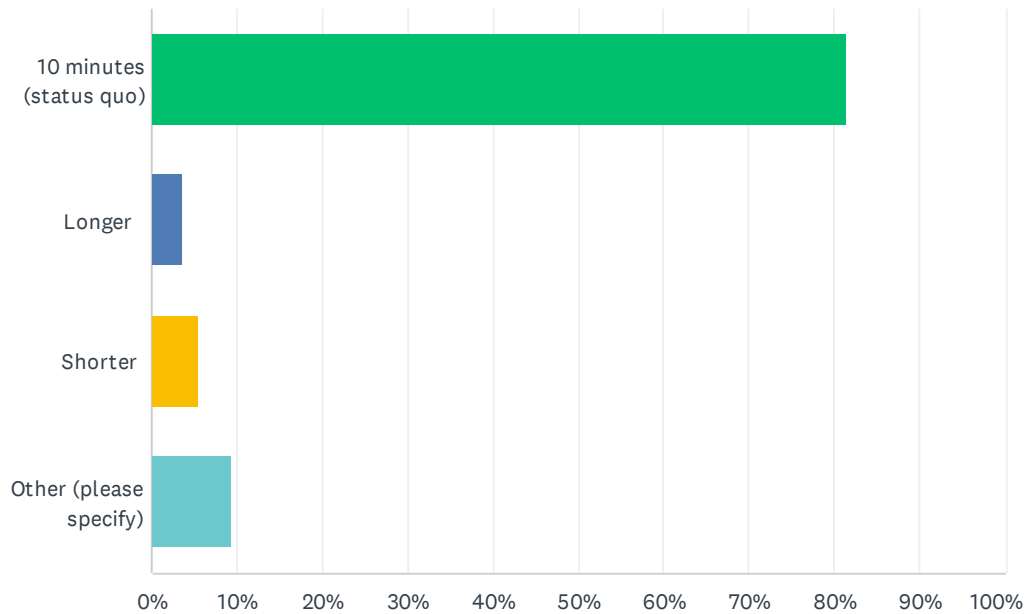


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
One break (status quo)	86.96%	140
More breaks	4.35%	7
No breaks	2.48%	4
Other (please specify)	6.21%	10
TOTAL		161

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	Several brands are good so that people feel refreshed and are not rushing through important decisions with Norte regard to finishing than considering the issues at hand.	2/1/2023 12:18 PM
2	For a zoom meeting? An in person meeting? More info please.	1/23/2023 9:30 PM
3	This definitely depends on the format, in person or remote	1/23/2023 9:40 AM
4	This really depends on if we are still remote. I think one break works well, though.	1/22/2023 10:42 PM
5	End at 10 pm. some of us have to get up at 5:30 or 6 am.	1/22/2023 8:48 PM
6	Depends on how long the meeting is going to last.	1/22/2023 8:31 PM
7	Have only attended virtually, so don't know about the need for breaks in-person.	1/22/2023 7:28 PM
8	Two breaks, at the hour.	1/22/2023 5:41 PM
9	maybe 2 shorter breaks	1/22/2023 5:23 PM
10	If online - no breaks. In person, one break is fine. But move along. So many of us have family and work obligations. Last year so many of us were impacted by how long everything took. Most of this was no ones fault (other than covid) but it went on way too long.	1/22/2023 4:36 PM

Q22 The breaks we take during Town Meeting should be:

Answered: 161 Skipped: 4



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
10 minutes (status quo)	81.37%	131
Longer	3.73%	6
Shorter	5.59%	9
Other (please specify)	9.32%	15
TOTAL		161

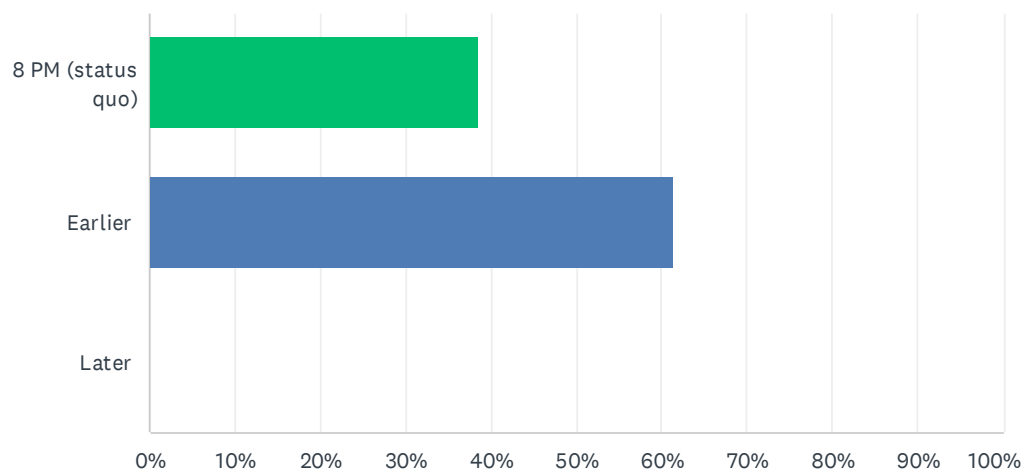
#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	If we're back in person, we'll need more than 10 minutes for everyone to rush the rest rooms. If we're remote, even then 10 minutes is a bit short.	2/3/2023 3:28 PM
2	There could even be a 10 min break and several 5 min breaks. It's worth trying.	2/1/2023 12:18 PM
3	Should be a bit longer if there's a bake sale, which I think is great.	1/31/2023 1:57 PM
4	A little longer would be useful, but not much longer (maybe 20 minutes?). One reason is that it gives TMMs a chance to chat with one another about the articles (in person or via text/Slack)...I think that's valuable.	1/26/2023 1:38 PM
5	This definitely depends on the format, in person or remote	1/23/2023 9:40 AM
6	15 minutes	1/22/2023 9:11 PM
7	If in person, a short break is OK< If virtual: a five minute break is enough, and end at 9:50. I know others can sleep later. You did not ask the actual timing. I would do 7:30 to 9:50.	1/22/2023 8:48 PM
8	If we're still at home, there is no need for a break longer than 5 minutes.	1/22/2023 8:31 PM
9	Again, don't know about length of in-person. Is there a long line for the women's bathroom?	1/22/2023 7:28 PM

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10	If in person increase to 20 minutes to allow time to eat outside with mask removed.	1/22/2023 6:48 PM
11	Fifteen minutes.	1/22/2023 6:27 PM
12	15 minutes	1/22/2023 6:01 PM
13	10 minutes when we are not in person. This is not enough time if we need to use the VERY LIMITED bathroom facilities at Town Hall, particularly if one is disabled or using the woman-gendered bathroom.	1/22/2023 5:41 PM
14	If just one break then 10 minutes is good. If multiple breaks then shorter, 5 mintues.	1/22/2023 5:23 PM
15	Especially if zoom	1/22/2023 4:56 PM

Q23 The start time of the first evening of Annual Town Meeting is set by the Town By-Laws in Title I Article 1 §1 as "the fourth Monday in April, at eight o'clock in the evening." Aside from the first night, I prefer that Town Meeting start:

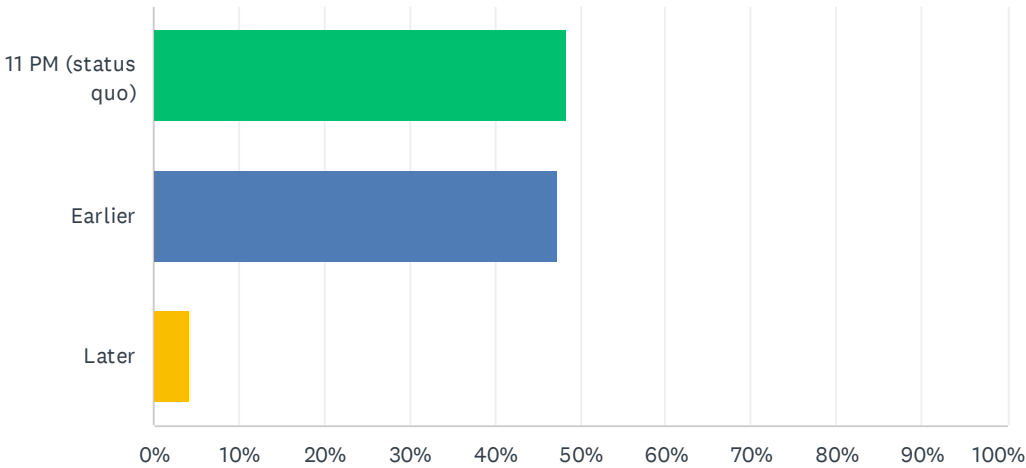
Answered: 163 Skipped: 2



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
8 PM (status quo)	38.65%	63
Earlier	61.35%	100
Later	0.00%	0
TOTAL		163

Q24 I prefer to adjourn Town Meeting each night:

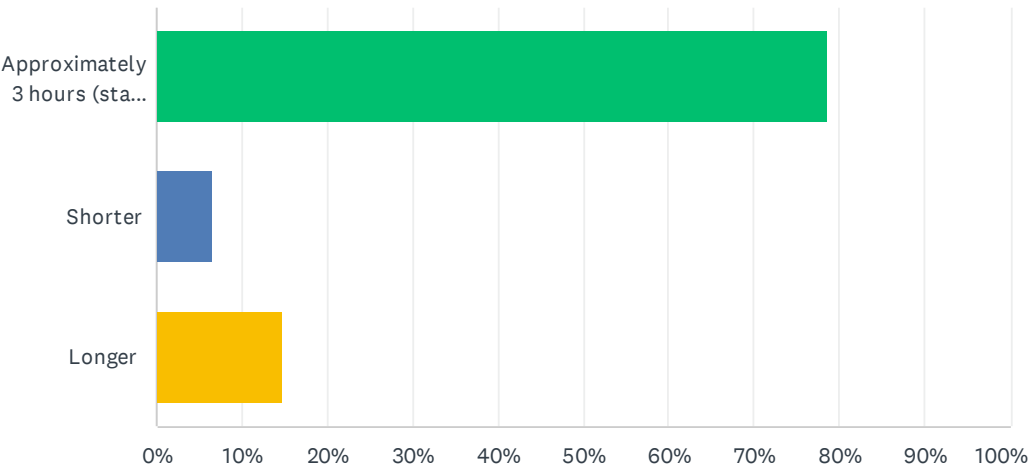
Answered: 163 Skipped: 2



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
11 PM (status quo)	48.47%	79
Earlier	47.24%	77
Later	4.29%	7
TOTAL		163

Q25 With the understanding that the length of each night at Town Meeting affects the total number of nights that we need to meet, I prefer that the duration of each full night at Town Meeting is:

Answered: 164 Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES		RESPONSES	
Approximately 3 hours (status quo)		78.66%	129
Shorter		6.71%	11
Longer		14.63%	24
TOTAL			164

Q26 Please share any further thoughts about the schedule for opening and adjourning Town Meeting.

Answered: 54 Skipped: 111

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	Some towns hold TM all in one day. Might that format be possible for Arlington?	2/6/2023 7:21 AM
2	7-10 sounds good to me	2/6/2023 3:26 AM
3	I prefer 7:30pm to 10:30pm sessions after session 1. The time taken at the beginning of each session for announcements, resolutions, and committee reports needs more discipline. Sometimes this unacceptably delays the start of substantive work of the meeting for 30 minutes or more.	2/4/2023 8:44 PM
4	I had trouble deciding on whether the hours should be 7-10 or 8-11. It might be harder for some portions to make it by 7, especially in person, and have time to get home and get food. Virtual isn't as difficult that way as there is access to food throughout. I often was eating dinner during the beginning.	2/1/2023 12:18 PM
5	Na	2/1/2023 7:55 AM
6	People will disagree but to me, it's very helpful when the moderator shares stats "we have discussed 3 warrant articles in 9 hours, at this rate we will be done in Sept".	1/31/2023 3:23 PM
7	I think the adjourning time for Town Meeting each night should be more related to the flow of debate around the specific article under discussion than the specific clock time. ie, please don't stop the meeting in the middle of a fruitful discussion just because the clock hits 11pm.	1/31/2023 2:58 PM
8	This schedule was selected to accommodate evening schedules, families, work commutes etc. Many have planned things around TM and changing the time would be unfair.	1/31/2023 2:52 PM
9	seems important to be creative if needed to move start time earlier given that it might bump into S Board or other mtgs held on TM evenings.	1/31/2023 2:26 PM
10	7-10 would be preferable. I am open to longer meetings on occasion but not twice a week - maybe 7-10 on Mondays and 7-11 on Wednesdays or something like that?	1/31/2023 2:18 PM
11	Can we get rid of announcing reports or reports from committees? Can't we just read those at our leisure?	1/31/2023 1:57 PM
12	In general I prefer fewer long meetings over more shorter meetings.	1/31/2023 1:57 PM
13	Earlier would be better, but I understand that some boards (Select, Fincom) have to meet beforehand.	1/29/2023 3:24 PM
14	I think the current time (with some flexibility at the end if we need a little more time to complete a vote) works fine. A lot of people can't realistically make it for an earlier start time (though when it is virtual, that helps), especially if they want to have dinner with their families. It is, after all, only for a few days per year so, if people want to serve on TM, they should understand that it will involve late nights.	1/26/2023 1:38 PM
15	I would prefer 7-11 with a longer break (15-20 mins), otherwise status quo is fine	1/26/2023 9:43 AM
16	I could see from 7pm to 11pm also being worth considering, though that's pretty long.	1/26/2023 7:46 AM
17	Please start earlier! I am mentally exhausted by 9/10 pm and I know I am no longer giving my best. 6:30 pm is much more reasonable.	1/25/2023 12:22 PM
18	I would prefer longer TMs and fewer days. Even 7-11 would be OK with me (although maybe then we'd need two short breaks?	1/25/2023 9:00 AM
19	Town meeting should take less time in total. Some ideas about things that might help: sanctions of some sort for abuse of point of order, shorter time limits for speakers, fewer	1/24/2023 9:12 PM

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gratuitous biased "questions" which just amount to more speaking time for proponents, eliminating resolutions.

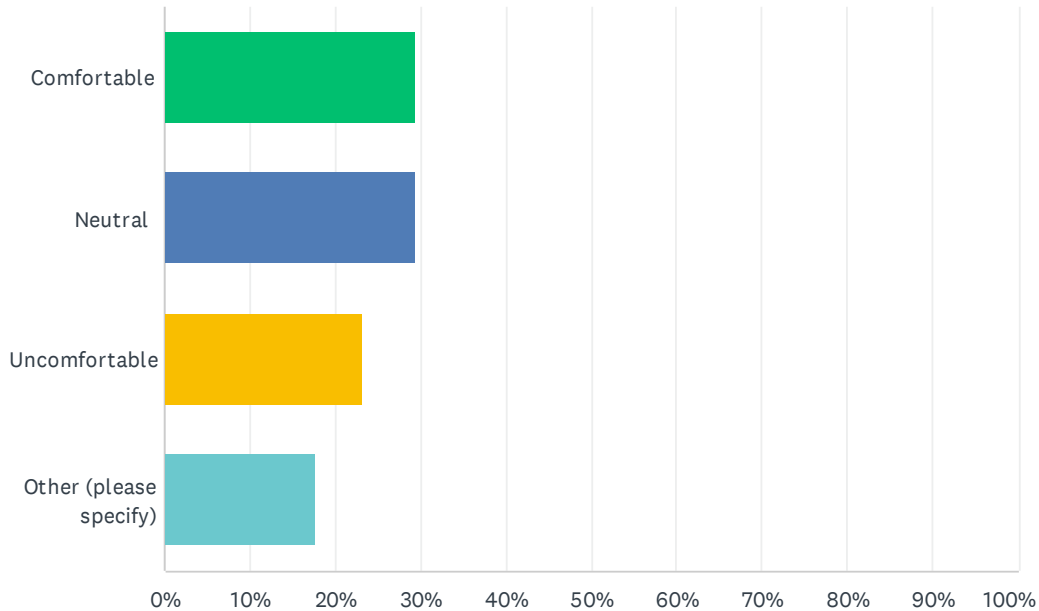
20	I personally don't mind varying the end time depending on the debate, ie adjourning half hour early because we finished an article or extending a half hour in order to finish an article. But I think there is a significant number who want a prompt end at 11.	1/24/2023 12:35 PM
21	I'm willing to experiment with starting earlier - e.g. 7-10pm. But i understand the conflicts that creates.	1/24/2023 9:55 AM
22	Moderator often goes past 11. Please finish by 11pm we lose too many TMMS as the evening progresses.	1/24/2023 9:32 AM
23	Again, is this a zoom meeting or an in person meeting? This survey is not going to produce useful info if we don't know what type of meeting it's going to be. Was this announced already?	1/23/2023 9:30 PM
24	7:00-10:00 or 7:30-10:30	1/23/2023 8:05 PM
25	I would open at 7:30 and close at 10:00.	1/23/2023 3:07 PM
26	I would suggest 7:30 - 10:30 with one break. I would also be fine if we met 7-10...	1/23/2023 2:56 PM
27	Strongly feel meetings should start and end earlier	1/23/2023 1:35 PM
28	A 7 - 10PM block of time would be preferable, to me. Time to get home and grab a bite and still wrap up at a decent hour.	1/23/2023 12:57 PM
29	Ending at 11:00 p.m. is inhumane. I'd like to do 8:00 to 10:00 every night but if we can't get through the business then we have to start earlier.	1/23/2023 9:40 AM
30	I'd like to try 7:30-10:30 or 7-10. I feel pretty antsy by the last hour. Might happen anyway, but I don't function well at 11:00.	1/23/2023 8:51 AM
31	Commence exactly at 8PM SHARP .. Otherwise over the course of the meeting we waste up to half a meeting do to tardiness of our start	1/23/2023 7:59 AM
32	I would prefer we start earlier, at 7 or 7:30pm.	1/23/2023 7:34 AM
33	If we're in person, 11:00 is too long to be sitting in an auditorium for 3 hours and then driving home. However, 3 hours on my home is fine, so if it's virtual childcare is easier as is comfort for that long a time block.	1/22/2023 11:51 PM
34	7:30-10:30	1/22/2023 10:46 PM
35	It is harder to stay connected remotely for three hours but I don't want Town Meeting going longer!	1/22/2023 10:42 PM
36	I've put the status quo for all of my answers but would be perfectly happy to do fewer nights starting earlier and ending 11pm or same # of nights starting earlier and ending earlier. For me it depends a lot on whether we are in person or not. If we are in person, starting earlier and ending earlier, or starting earlier and having fewer nights would be much more preferable. Online, it doesn't make as much difference to me.	1/22/2023 10:17 PM
37	I selected 3 hours (8-11pm) because I am interested in the least number of town meetings to get through the warrant and I feel 3 hrs is the max you can ask for anyone to sit through 1 mtg.	1/22/2023 8:52 PM
38	I would like 4 hour meetings until we finish or become more efficient with out time	1/22/2023 8:51 PM
39	It could be a lot shorter if the speaking time was shorter, too. People should be able to say what they have to say in 3 minutes or less. And if virtual: send out the videos or powerpoints ahead of time and do not play them at TM. Some of these presentations, the High School, the VOC school, could all be on PPT and sent out ahead of time and we need not take up the whole TM to play them at such length. Use the virtual space the way it can be used.	1/22/2023 8:48 PM
40	11 PM is a really late night, especially if we're in person. It's not so bad if we're at home, but even then 10/10:30 feels more reasonable. I'd much rather start a bit earlier so we can be home at a more reasonable hour.	1/22/2023 8:31 PM
41	I was unhappy the moderator disallowed some questions last year when it was the last chance to ask them of outgoing town manager. This is when residents get answers to questions!	1/22/2023 7:48 PM
42	I think if the efficiency could be improved everything else should work.	1/22/2023 7:39 PM

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43	Obviously depends on how close you seem to be to finishing an article/TM...	1/22/2023 6:48 PM
44	My comments assume we are back in person. If we remain online, I suggest no breaks. If you need a break, take one. There is so much downtime. No need to add more.	1/22/2023 6:45 PM
45	Maybe starting at 7pm and ending at 11pm, with 2 decent breaks?	1/22/2023 6:26 PM
46	I'm not convinced that a 2.5 hour meeting (7:30-10:00) would result in more meetings. Sometimes people debate an issue till the end of that day's meeting. If we could gain efficiency by limiting time on procedural issues we might have the same number of meetings.	1/22/2023 6:15 PM
47	I actually suspect that shortening the nightly meeting time by 30 minutes would NOT dramatically increase the number of nights. Instead, I think we would see more focused work, at least after a few sessions	1/22/2023 5:53 PM
48	It would be great to have a Spring and Fall Town Meeting that each go fewer weeks. Maybe budget related items could be in the Spring, and all other business could be in the Fall. It would mean an adjustment for the first few cycles, but then we'd develop a rhythm.	1/22/2023 5:41 PM
49	It starts too late and has run over. People don't care after 10 o'clock. I have to get up quit early and it's hard to be focused	1/22/2023 5:27 PM
50	Ideally I think we should move town meeting to January.	1/22/2023 5:07 PM
51	I had to leave being a TMM this year. I'm a teacher. I just cannot stay awake past 10 pm since I have to get up at 5:30 am to get to work by 7 am for a full day of being "on" - I cannot be tired or sluggish as a teacher. It's a shame.	1/22/2023 4:58 PM
52	I would recommend a 7:00 PM start	1/22/2023 4:40 PM
53	I wish it went from 7-10pm. For those of us who have to be at work very early in the am, 11pm is late.	1/22/2023 4:36 PM
54	Personally I would prefer 7-10 pm	1/22/2023 4:31 PM

Q27 With regard to the opening invocation on the first night of Town Meeting being given by a member of the clergy, I am:

Answered: 163 Skipped: 2



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Comfortable	29.45%	48
Neutral	29.45%	48
Uncomfortable	23.31%	38
Other (please specify)	17.79%	29
TOTAL		163

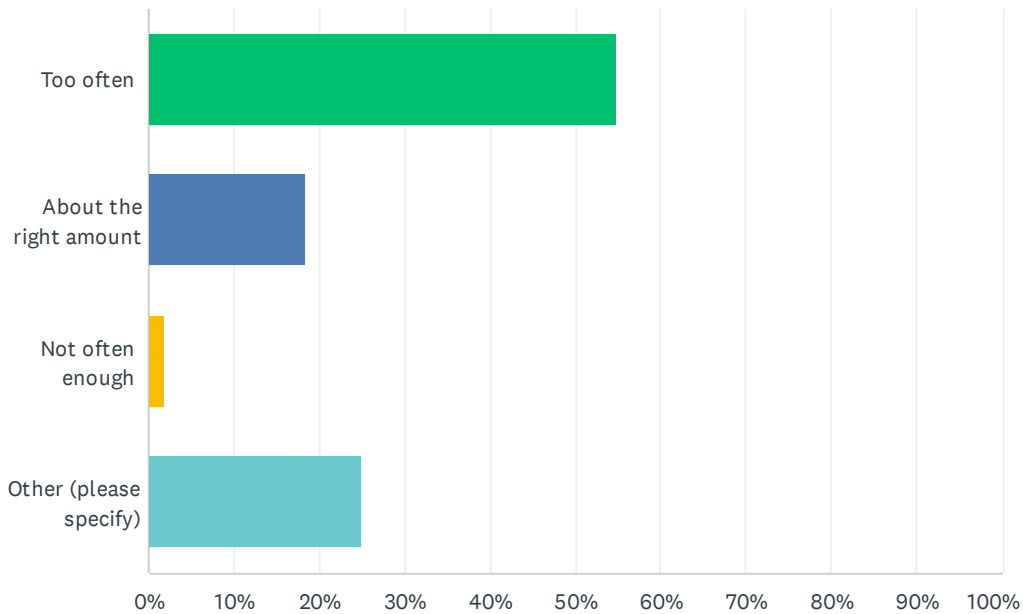
#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	It hasn't been handled badly in the past but it does make me uncomfortable.	2/11/2023 11:37 AM
2	Why do we need to have an invocation? Brings in the question of equity across religions - are we going to try to accommodate every religion?	2/5/2023 4:27 PM
3	Religious practices including invocations don't belong in official deliberations of civil government. If it is determined to continue the opening night invocation, do it at 7:55pm, before the Town Meeting is called to order at 8:00pm, and make it clear that it is not officially part of the Meeting and not in the official records thereof.	2/4/2023 8:44 PM
4	I would like to see some variety. Can invocation be split between multiple faiths? Even if only once, I would love to see a Buddhist invocation, or a Native American invocation. I know a Vodou Priestess who gives beautiful invocations, but she's not local, so we'd have to pay her.	2/3/2023 3:28 PM
5	Comfortable but I think it would be helpful to expand the pool of potential speakers outside the broad range of "clergy" members. We could enjoy meaningful invocations from other prominent members of our community, even if they are not associated with any church.	2/1/2023 4:09 PM
6	I am not religious but having some philosophical passages presented is not a bad thing	2/1/2023 12:58 PM

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7	Seperaton of church and state	2/1/2023 12:18 PM
8	As long as it is not religious	1/31/2023 3:46 PM
9	Deeply uncomfortable and very opposed.	1/31/2023 11:57 AM
10	I am not uncomfortable, per se, but I think religious activities like prayer have no place at a government event, regardless of whether it is considered "nondenominational". And, they definitely can make some people feel excluded. I think other activities (such as the Minutemen and the performances by groups like the AHS Madrigals) are great, fun to listen to, and encouraging of community spirit, so I think we should continue to devote time to those. But, please finally end the prayers. Cutting them down to only one was progress but I don't think there should be any.	1/26/2023 1:38 PM
11	It doesn't do anything for me, but I don't see the harm if religious people want it. Maybe they could post a written version of the invocation that could be on the screen as people gather?	1/25/2023 8:20 PM
12	Many of the "clergy" invited were from political activist organizations masquerading as religion. Whoever picked them was promoting an agenda.	1/24/2023 10:30 PM
13	I am opposed to this practice. Even from my (religious) perspective, I am opposed to imposing any particular set of religious speech on the body. Rotating the speech to come from different religious perspectives does not help. We should eliminate this.	1/24/2023 9:12 PM
14	I don't personally think it is a necessary part of the opening ceremonies, but as long as the officiant is fairly chosen and keeps their remarks non-denominational, I do not object.	1/24/2023 12:35 PM
15	As long as it is kept short and reasonably secular.	1/23/2023 8:14 PM
16	I feel neutral, but would be fine without it.	1/23/2023 2:56 PM
17	Preference is for eliminating this ritual or at best assuring it is not religious in nature	1/23/2023 1:35 PM
18	Don't mind but it takes away from time we could get other things done.	1/23/2023 12:13 PM
19	I don't think there should be a religious component to a government meeting, especially one that is not representative of the entire body or town	1/22/2023 11:51 PM
20	I wouldn't be comfortable with just any member of the clergy but the reverend from the Unitarian church that does the invocation does a great job and it does not feel overly religious to me. I've always felt comfortable with it even though I am not Christian. That said, it might be interesting to have an invocation that is completely divorced from religion. I would be open to that.	1/22/2023 10:17 PM
21	Shrug. It does not bother me, but I could easily see how it could feel exclusionary. Even if one gets representation from all faiths in town, where does that leave the atheists and agnostics?	1/22/2023 9:52 PM
22	It's a risk we don't need to take. Good clergy are respectful. Bad ones make me extremely uncomfortable. I'd rather the Moderator led a moment of silence to reflect on the oath just administered. The order of events can change to make sense of opening night.	1/22/2023 9:09 PM
23	I believe this is inappropriate. In injects a religious angle that has no place in public government meetings	1/22/2023 8:51 PM
24	not need: This is not a religious activity.	1/22/2023 8:48 PM
25	I don't want woke invocations.	1/22/2023 7:48 PM
26	It really depends on the language used.	1/22/2023 7:44 PM
27	There is a standing agreement that the invocation is to respect of all religious traditions and beliefs. Most clergy are able to do this responsibly. We have had one or two in the past who have reverted to their particular faith, and the members have been vocal in opposition. I think an opening that puts our work in a broader societal framework is a great reminder of why we serve. We don't want or need a sermon.	1/22/2023 6:45 PM
28	I have pose any invocation from a specific religious tradition	1/22/2023 5:53 PM
29	I don't care	1/22/2023 5:27 PM

Q28 Members raised points of order:

Answered: 164 Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Too often	54.88%	90
About the right amount	18.29%	30
Not often enough	1.83%	3
Other (please specify)	25.00%	41
TOTAL		164

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	The actual points of order are correct. There should be a mechanism for dealing with town meeting members who use them to skip the speaking queue.	2/12/2023 4:27 PM
2	Don't give so much air time to complainers, some input is good	2/6/2023 3:26 AM
3	What does and doesn't constitute a Point of Order should be clearly explained (at every session if necessary), and then strictly enforced, by the Moderator. Members have abused the Points of Order option and Moderators Worden, Leone, and Christiana have all allowed this across the whole length of my Town Meeting service, especially at remote/virtual sessions. It's time for a firmer hand.	2/4/2023 8:44 PM
4	seems to depend on how confused things are.	2/3/2023 3:28 PM
5	I have no issues with legitimate points of order- what annoys me are members without a clue who interrupt with statements that are NOT points of order	2/1/2023 5:17 PM
6	Moderator does a good job trying to stifle POO that are being used to allow someone to interject themselves into the debate or otherwise interrupt the debate	2/1/2023 12:58 PM
7	Not sure	1/31/2023 7:30 PM

2022 Annual Town Meeting Feedback

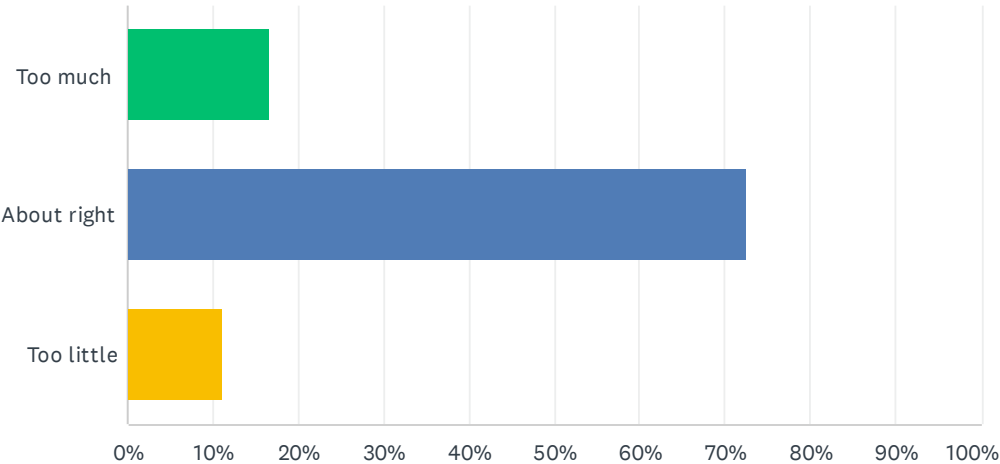
8	There was still confusion over what they were.	1/31/2023 4:38 PM
9	There seems to be a delay in calling a point of order via Zoom. A point of order is called with some sense of immediacy - as is questioning scope of a discussion.	1/31/2023 3:36 PM
10	"points of order" are not debate and when people use this to debate, they should be shut down.	1/31/2023 3:23 PM
11	A shared, easily readable reference on what counts as a point of order should be shared with all.	1/31/2023 2:18 PM
12	Too often in the remote meetings, about right for live meetings.	1/31/2023 1:57 PM
13	Most members used the Point of Order well, but it was clear that some individuals used it to get around the speaker queue or to harass the moderator or speakers.	1/31/2023 11:57 AM
14	This ,at be a function of it being virtual I returned to TM after a long break just this past year. I don't recall points of order being abused in the past	1/30/2023 7:34 PM
15	Many of the "points of order" raised were not actually points of order.	1/30/2023 5:09 PM
16	it is abused due to the drawbacks of the Zoom platform and members who do not understand the rules.	1/30/2023 2:08 PM
17	The Zoom format creates more POO situations because of glitches/user errors, etc. As long as we're meeting remotely, there will be more POOs than there would be at in-person meetings. that said, a lot of folks did not understand how the POO is supposed to be used.	1/25/2023 8:20 PM
18	Given the zoom format, I was ok with it. If we go in person, some of these points aren't relevant.	1/25/2023 9:12 AM
19	Not sure how to respond given it was my first year as a TMM. Many points of order thought seemed to not be real points of order but were instead arguments.	1/25/2023 9:00 AM
20	There is abuse of the point of order. But at the same time, the point of order is not sufficient for our needs, meaning that strictly enforcing the printed rules would not benefit the meeting. The Moderator must sort out the legitimate points, and sometimes gets it wrong. The Moderator also does not always communicate reasons for ruling. Consistency is critical for the meeting to learn how the rules are being applied, so it is much better to err on the side of consistent application of rules.	1/24/2023 12:35 PM
21	More training sessions needed on this topic	1/24/2023 9:32 AM
22	My memory is that Points of Order were raised too frequently at the beginning of TM last year, then subsided to a reasonable frequency after guidance from the Moderator.	1/23/2023 3:07 PM
23	Many don't use a Point of Order correctly.	1/23/2023 11:55 AM
24	Moderator needs to be firm on rejecting out of order points of order .. With no discussion .. And members need to pledge to abide by the Moderator's decision without further discussion/comment .. Period	1/23/2023 7:59 AM
25	Some members do not appear to understand the purpose of a point of order and use this as a means to forward arguments. The moderator did a good job of making the distinction but could possibly cut the member off sooner when it becomes apparent they do not have an appropriate point of order.	1/23/2023 7:34 AM
26	Too often, yet think that once Miderator matures in the roll and technology us mastered better, points of order will decrease	1/22/2023 11:09 PM
27	There were too many points of order which were not points of order.	1/22/2023 10:58 PM
28	I think explaining what "point of order" does and what other options we might have would be useful. It sometimes seemed that that was the only way for folks to get the Moderator's attention	1/22/2023 10:42 PM
29	It was about the right amount except for the times points of orders were raised about technical difficulties (which was a lot unfortunately)	1/22/2023 10:17 PM
30	Answer specific to zoom. Wasn't a problem in person.	1/22/2023 9:52 PM
31	I would add: way too often, and most of them are not real Pts of Order.	1/22/2023 8:48 PM

2022 Annual Town Meeting Feedback

32	It was my first year so I don't have anything to compare this to.	1/22/2023 8:31 PM
33	When actual points of order were raised they were valid the majority of the time, but people were frequently using the point of order button for things that weren't actually points of order.	1/22/2023 7:51 PM
34	One new person raised too many points of order. Somebody should have assisted him off-line	1/22/2023 7:48 PM
35	We need fewer points of order that are really points of information, and more to check scope and keep speakers on point.	1/22/2023 7:41 PM
36	Can we get a 3 strikes rule for using this wrong?	1/22/2023 7:39 PM
37	There were way too many which didn't qualify as point of order. Moderator should be more vigilant to keep those from taking time at the Town Meeting.	1/22/2023 7:06 PM
38	As guided by Moderator; generally as needed for clarity. At times not sure who was manipulating whom.	1/22/2023 6:48 PM
39	Way the hell to often. It was frequently abused to extend debate or make a point after debate was ended. It got better later on, but it is really important to make sure it is used for its intended purpose. Maybe have a three-strikes policy on those who refuse to abide by the rules...	1/22/2023 6:45 PM
40	Members should be clear on what constitutes "point of order motion". So, when they are gaveled out of order it is clear to the body.	1/22/2023 6:27 PM
41	Often members do not understand Roberts Rules of order, this should be learned by all members.	1/22/2023 4:40 PM

Q29 The amount of guidance that the Moderator offered about procedural options (offering amendments and substitute motions, laying an article on the table, postponing to a date/time certain, etc) to Town Meeting Members on the "floor" of Town Meeting was:

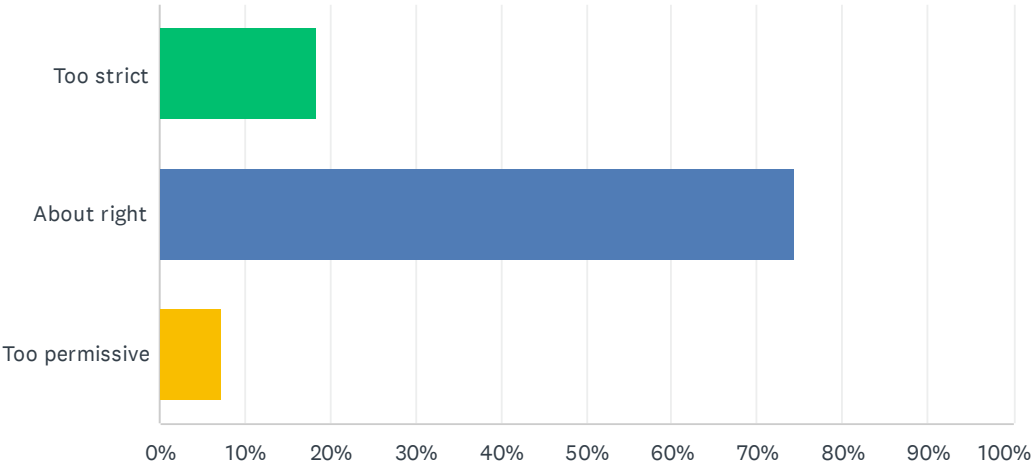
Answered: 163 Skipped: 2



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Too much	16.56%	27
About right	72.39%	118
Too little	11.04%	18
TOTAL		163

Q30 The rules for accepting amendments and substitute motions within 48 hours of debate are:

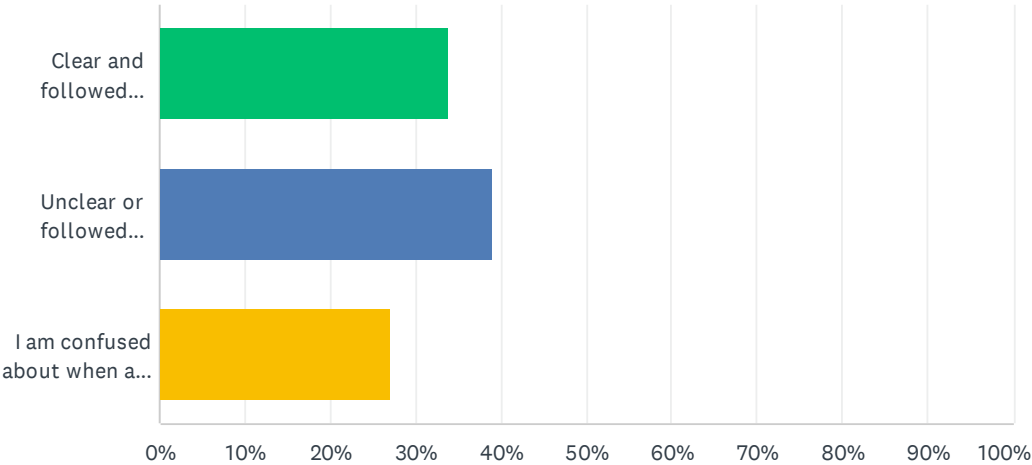
Answered: 164 Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Too strict	18.29%	30
About right	74.39%	122
Too permissive	7.32%	12
TOTAL		164

Q31 The rules for accepting amendments and substitute motions within 48 hours of debate are:

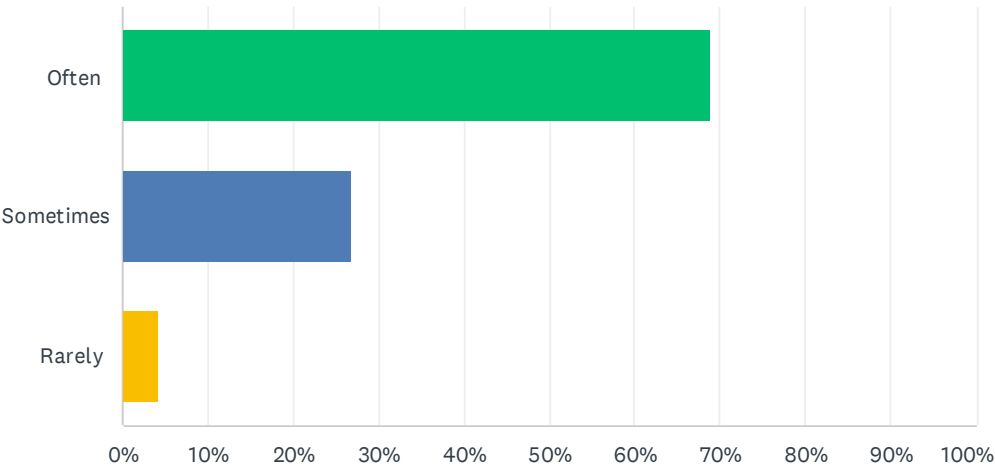
Answered: 159 Skipped: 6



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Clear and followed consistently	33.96%	54
Unclear or followed inconsistently	38.99%	62
I am confused about when a change can be made from the floor	27.04%	43
TOTAL		159

Q32 I can find relevant material related to Town Meeting on the Town website:

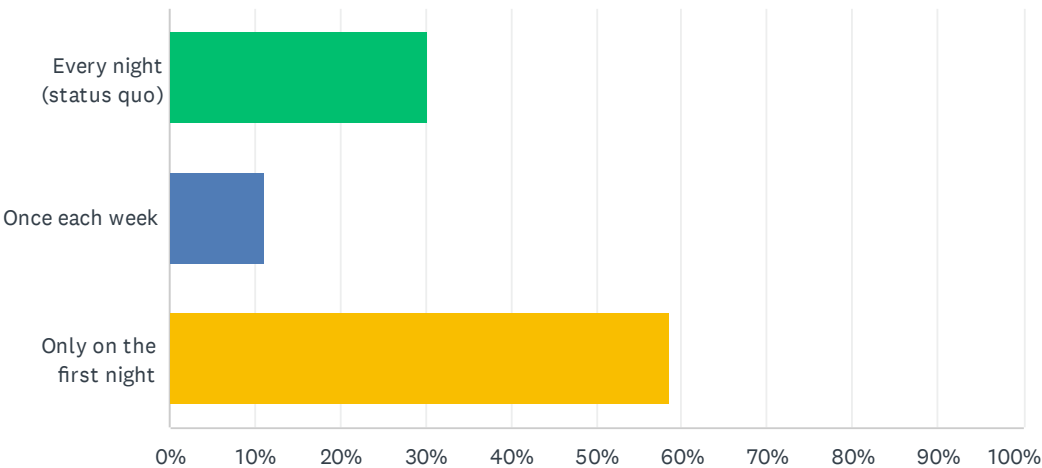
Answered: 164 Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Often	68.90%	113
Sometimes	26.83%	44
Rarely	4.27%	7
TOTAL		164

Q33 I would prefer that the National Anthem be played:

Answered: 162 Skipped: 3



ANSWER CHOICES		RESPONSES	
Every night (status quo)		30.25%	49
Once each week		11.11%	18
Only on the first night		58.64%	95
TOTAL			162

Q34 Please share any further thoughts about how we spend our time during Town Meeting.

Answered: 40 Skipped: 125

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	Consent Agenda process needs improvement. Explain the process at session 1, do the agenda at session 2, to allow members time to get their feet on the ground, so to speak. There should be three consent agenda: no-action-recommended articles*, majority-vote routine articles*, 2/3-vote routine articles*. No-action articles should not be allowed to be held unless a sub motion has already been submitted or is submitted when that article is called. *All financial articles ie those seeking appropriations should not be in a consent agenda, no matter how routine. Listening to and participating in Q-and-A on financial matters is the best way for members to learn and understand the Town's financial complexity: opportunity for that learning is lost when so-called routine financial articles are included in a consent agenda.	2/4/2023 8:44 PM
2	I appreciated seeing different people playing/singing the anthem, and would love to see more in that vein. Can we put a call to the schools for any groups who want to submit a performance to Town Meeting? Or other community groups?	2/3/2023 3:28 PM
3	For the National Anthem - I would prefer that it only be played when we are conducting Town Meeting live in Town Hall, and only as often as we have a unique performer for that term (series of nights spent on the warrant and/or special town meeting warrant).	2/1/2023 4:09 PM
4	I love the bake sale!	1/31/2023 3:23 PM
5	Perhaps provide a "cheat sheet" for common problem areas and the process (flow chart maybe?) And enforce the limits. TMMs took advantage and misused Points of Order and took things too far. Overly sensitive comments taken way out of proportion are ruining the spirit of TM. More nasty and impolite comments than I have ever seen. It's sad. I feel virtual forum contributes to this as many would not behave like this in person.	1/31/2023 2:52 PM
6	Moderator needs to explain procedural matters and the substance of an issue very *clearly and concisely*. Moderator took too much time over-explaining procedure and substance, repeating self and with ums and ahs. Respect for TM members' time is a central consideration; it is TM members' duty to keep up with procedure, not just the moderator's job to spoonfeed. (With texts and the Slack channel, the moderator is not the only one who can explain these things.)	1/31/2023 2:24 PM
7	I appreciate the moderator's work in explaining things this past round, but would love to see ways to refer people to written information in order to speed things up.	1/31/2023 2:18 PM
8	Come on people we have to keep some semblance of National spirit and being citizens of the USA	1/30/2023 2:08 PM
9	When changes are made from the floor, I have a hard time following what the changes are, and what the order is for amendment. Can we do a quick ppt to show what is going on?	1/25/2023 9:12 AM
10	Wtf is the national anthem even a question? The fact this is a question shows how far this town has gone off the deep end.	1/24/2023 10:30 PM
11	I have heard from several TMs who are quitting/plan to quit due to the duration of the meeting. We should pare down the ceremonial items. Keep Wood and Bark (short), and state of the Town, but eliminate nearly all other ceremonial items. Also eliminate resolutions. Either we debate them fully and waste a huge amount of time on (often) hot-button issues that we cannot change or we have minimal debate and give proponents an incentive to "put TM on the record" for whatever their thing is. Neither is a good outcome and we should remove them entirely. If we must vote on them (since they're on the warrant), I would like to vote "no action."	1/24/2023 9:12 PM
12	I enjoy singing with my neighbors. But, not a core function of TM!	1/24/2023 4:24 PM
13	It needs to be possible to react to something on Monday's debate with an amendment that can be debated on Wednesday. 48 hours is too short for that. Maybe noon Friday for Monday's debate and noon Tuesday for Wednesday?	1/24/2023 12:35 PM

2022 Annual Town Meeting Feedback

14	I like traditions. I like the fife and bugles at first meeting. I like for the moderator to have new town meeting members sworn in separately from returning members so that we can applaud them. I don't need the tradition of the invocation. I don't have strong opinion on the National Anthem, other than that I find it very hard to sing.	1/24/2023 9:55 AM
15	I am extremely put off by the religious prayers - by any and all denominations. This is the antithesis of the inclusive values that the town prides itself on. I was also put off by the Jesus/gospel song that played during the break with a montage of victims of racial incidents.	1/23/2023 9:30 PM
16	To me, the essence of ATM is hearing what my fellow TMMs think about an issue. Do some go on too long, or make repetitive points? Occasionally. Do I learn and sometimes have my intended vote changed by arguments? Yes. The downsides, to me, are outweighed by the upsides.	1/23/2023 12:57 PM
17	Less time having the Moderator explaining things to people.	1/23/2023 12:13 PM
18	The invocation is just wrong. It violates separation of church and state morally if not legally. It puts a block between people of no faith and their government. There is no way to make it palatable and we need to stop doing it.	1/23/2023 10:01 AM
19	Again .. Playing to begin at exactly 8PM SHARP .. This will settle down the meeting and make everyone realize that we are starting...	1/23/2023 7:59 AM
20	I like the traditions for starting town meeting, although due to the length of the past few sessions I would prefer we start earlier, at 7 or 7:30pm	1/23/2023 7:34 AM
21	If there are ancillary materials , Slack channel, blogs, etc that mist TM members know about, would be inclusive to announce these, maybe the Clerk can, so new TM members are elevated into the membership	1/22/2023 11:09 PM
22	Efficiency can be double edged. But worth thinking about what sacred cows are worth keeping and what are worth cutting.	1/22/2023 9:52 PM
23	Would welcome prayer each night by different clergy.	1/22/2023 9:11 PM
24	I think it is good to ask for advance notice (48 hrs) for an amendment (which allows everyone to read it) - however, if someone wants to make a modification to that amendment on the floor - I think that should be allowed and I'm not sure if it is. Otherwise, someone could file an amendment 48 hrs in advance and a similar tweak of the same concept wouldn't be put forth.	1/22/2023 8:52 PM
25	It would be helpful for the moderator to be prepared to clearly explain what a "yes" vote means and what a "no" vote means on each warrant article motion and any amendments. A lack of this caused a lot of confusion and time wasted at the 2022 town meeting. The moderator might want to enlist the deputy moderator to help in this effort	1/22/2023 8:51 PM
26	The moderator talked too much. Too much time was lost in problems with the software. In-person does not have this. Poor that Zoom did not allow video of TM speakers.	1/22/2023 7:48 PM
27	The moderator spent too much time explaining each vote. Votes were held open too long as people confused about what we were doing asked questions. Exceptions due to confusion of the rules were made too often. People who are confused should abstain rather than taking the time of the meeting for personal clarifications.	1/22/2023 7:41 PM
28	For many articles, the moderator was unclear when describing what we were voting on. There were times the moderator added confusion among the TMMs. Moderator needs to do his homework, and have a clear understanding of each article before they are brought forward.	1/22/2023 7:20 PM
29	If in person TMM's are to "group sing" masking should be required!!!! Seating should be more distanced than usual and likely include seating in part or all of balcony. Since voting in by electronic clicker this should be possible to monitor. Perhaps for this year only it could be done only on first night. This would keep air in Hall less virus laden.	1/22/2023 6:48 PM
30	I think this part of procedure is handled relatively well. The 48hr rule is important, but we must be sure that things get posted quickly and accurately.	1/22/2023 6:45 PM
31	Each member should be provided a list of rules and how to make a motion. These rules should be enforced consistently.	1/22/2023 6:27 PM
32	No need to bring religion into the start of our Town Meeting. Town government SHOULD be	1/22/2023 6:26 PM

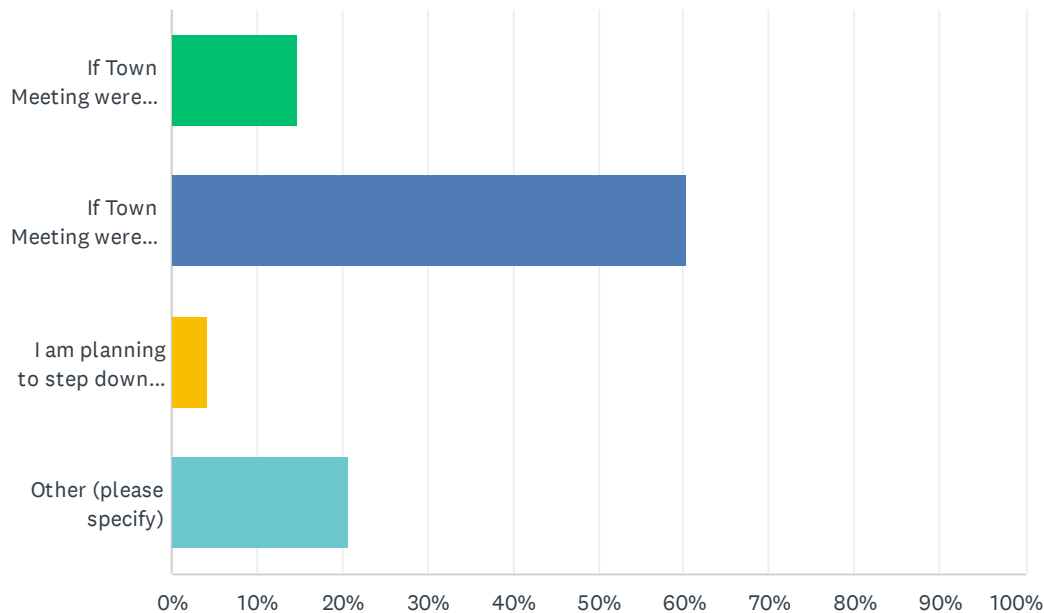
2022 Annual Town Meeting Feedback

secular. And no need to continue the nationalism/jingoism of constantly repeating the anthem and pledge of allegiance. If anything, the start of every Town Meeting should be treated like any meeting, being clear on what we are trying to accomplish, what we are doing here, and why we are here.

33	If atheists and anarchists don't like the opening invocation or National Anthem at Town Meeting, they can mute their speakers on Zoom or leave the Town Hall meeting room.	1/22/2023 6:19 PM
34	I felt that the moderator did a good job at making the procedural aspects clear (e.g., what we were about to vote on, what a yes vote meant, and what a no vote meant)	1/22/2023 6:01 PM
35	I would prefer that we stop playing the National Anthem. If not acceptable to enough people, then only on the first night.	1/22/2023 5:41 PM
36	I think we need make it harder to remove items from the consent agenda. Maybe requiring 25% of members vote in favor of removing it.	1/22/2023 5:07 PM
37	every night, BUT ONLY if you have a live person, and for heaven's sake, please don't repeat video performances.	1/22/2023 5:04 PM
38	I think providing summaries of warrant articles in plain language is important. I think the Moderator needs to rule with a firm hand and fewer words.	1/22/2023 4:58 PM
39	Focus on Town Meeting so the meetings are about the articles. Make better use of time overall.	1/22/2023 4:56 PM
40	Members should read the materials and be prepared before the meeting.	1/22/2023 4:40 PM

Q35 Hybrid Town Meeting, i.e. a combination of in-person and remote participation, is not currently an option, and Town Meeting by remote participation currently requires a determination that it is not possible to safely assemble due to COVID-19. Given those constraints, and based on your personal health risks due to current COVID-19 levels, which statement best reflects your situation if Town Meeting were held today:

Answered: 164 Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES		RESPONSES	
If Town Meeting were held in-person indoors today, it would not be possible for me to safely participate due to risks to my health from COVID-19.		14.63%	24
If Town Meeting were held in-person indoors today, the risks to my health from COVID-19 would be acceptable.		60.37%	99
I am planning to step down or not run		4.27%	7
Other (please specify)		20.73%	34
TOTAL			164

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	I prefer remote meeting, but I am willing to take the risks involved to serve in-person if that is necessary. Remote meeting broadened the people who could serve on town meeting to include middle class working parents, for example.	2/11/2023 11:37 AM
2	I'm unsure. The health risk for me is minimal but I have immediate family who are very high risk (on oxygen). I would determine my attendance based on covid numbers at the time of the meeting and other factors.	2/6/2023 7:21 AM
3	I would be uncomfortable, but probably attend anyway. As an industrial hygienist, I feel that the prevalence of long covid is greatly underestimated by the general population, and that would be	2/1/2023 5:17 PM

2022 Annual Town Meeting Feedback

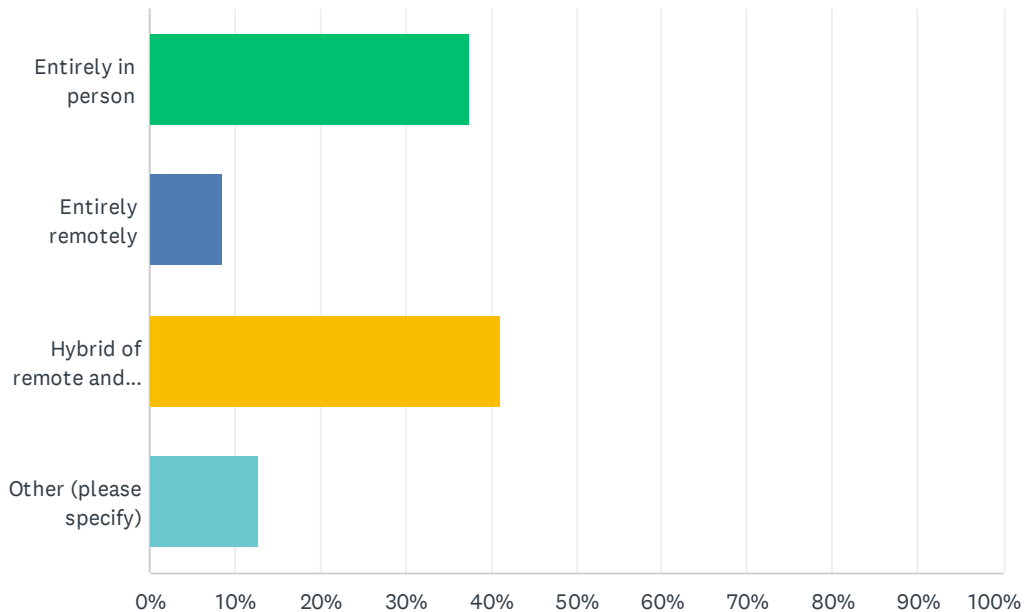
	my concern.	
4	The risks to my health would be acceptable if KN95 or N95 masks were worn properly by all attendees except while speaking.	2/1/2023 4:09 PM
5	I am currently on immuno - suppressants. I have to diminish my risk of exposure to Covid-19 and other possible infections. Meeting in Town Hall is much to concentrated for me to risk. Thank you	2/1/2023 12:58 PM
6	I am not sure. I worry about peeps who have worse health risks than I have but I would also put my partner at risk. Just as an FYI both Belmont and Lexington are doing virtual/remote town meeting at this time: https://www.belmont-ma.gov/town-clerk/pages/town-meeting-documents-information#:~:text=A%20Special%20Town%20Meeting%20has,Monday%2C%20January%2030%2C%202023 . https://www.lexingtonma.gov/565/Town-Meeting I know of several town meeting members who will drop out of it is in person and it would be a shame to lose them. Not everyone has had the new vaccine yet either. I think only certain demographics can get it. I haven't had it yet myself because I waited to get the fourth shot (2nd booster) did I would be maximally protected when I had an in person business event I couldn't avoid.	2/1/2023 12:18 PM
7	Cautious in such a crowded space.	2/1/2023 10:41 AM
8	I have served for 2 years of online sessions. Meeting in person will be tough on my family and requires us to change several routines. Also, while not at risk myself, I want Town Meeting to be accessible for people with health concerns, singl parents, disabled folks, etc.	1/31/2023 7:30 PM
9	While *I* could take part in-person, I find it very efficient to meet remotely.	1/31/2023 4:38 PM
10	It depends not only on an individual's health, but also on the characteristics of the latest strain of COVID. You say that "Hybrid Town Meeting ... is not currently an option." What's being done to address that? The work needs to be done so that it can be an option ASAP! No TMM should ever have to choose between risking COVID or resigning!	1/31/2023 2:26 PM
11	If town meeting were not remote I would not be ABLE to participate because I have small children. I need to be home during the times that town meeting meets!!	1/31/2023 2:09 PM
12	It's easier to remote participate	1/31/2023 2:05 PM
13	I am planning to not run and part of that decision is not knowing what the COVID-19 mitigations will be.	1/31/2023 9:17 AM
14	I would wear a mask during the meeting. If I spoke, I would not want to remove my mask, so there might be a problem with being heard.	1/29/2023 3:24 PM
15	I would not be comfortable as I am not comfortable in crowded public spaces in which I sometimes find myself.	1/26/2023 9:37 PM
16	Though I don't myself feel at high risk, I think how comfortable I would feel attending in person will depend on the Covid situation at the time. (Because it is a relatively crowded event.) If it is held in person, we should consider requiring proof of vaccination and masking. This is a public health issue, not a political one (though, obviously some people will interpret it as political). Ideally, there would be a remote option for anybody who does not feel comfortable attending in person. I know this is difficult logistically but we have to find a way to allow people who are at risk through no fault of their own (i.e. who are vaccinated) to participate.	1/26/2023 1:38 PM
17	I would expect folks to mask up, and respect personal space. Some of us deal with immunocompromised folk.	1/25/2023 9:12 AM
18	Mass lockdowns were long since proven ineffective and counterproductive. Fauci is a fraud.	1/24/2023 10:30 PM
19	I would follow the recommendation of our Health Director, since I am not in a position to assess the risks. But in person is superior to remote.	1/24/2023 4:24 PM
20	It's not just about Covid, it's also about making it accessible for people who are parents or disabled. The hybrid option allows for more diversity on TM.	1/23/2023 9:23 PM
21	I would prefer that all people on the floor wear masks.	1/23/2023 8:14 PM
22	The risks will only be acceptable if I always wear an n95 mask.	1/23/2023 2:36 PM
23	Given the tight quarters and length of time we need to sit in Town Hall, I would not feel	1/23/2023 12:57 PM

2022 Annual Town Meeting Feedback

	comfortable at an in-person meeting.	
24	Virtual or hybrid is preferred	1/23/2023 11:57 AM
25	I would like the town to consider requiring masking during the in person meeting and also Covid testing the day of the meeting for all attendees	1/22/2023 8:51 PM
26	many people getting Covid now	1/22/2023 8:48 PM
27	It would be possible for me to attend Town Meeting in person without severe health risks, but the heightened chance of infection to me and my family would be very disruptive to our lives.	1/22/2023 7:51 PM
28	I think if we meet in person, there is a great likelihood of significant transmission of covid, causing many members to be absent from some sessions.	1/22/2023 7:28 PM
29	We would need a 10 minute longer break for distanced eating (while unmasked and likely outdoors) and seating would need to be more distanced perhaps using balcony. I would likely mask because of it being a "congested space". Like my church behavior, I would be willing to unmask at microphone. There should be hand sanitizer available at many places with contact points.	1/22/2023 6:48 PM
30	I would ok with in-person, so long as the area is well ventilated and masks are encouraged. I would also think that there would be more breaks needed having folks in a large space, with masks.	1/22/2023 6:26 PM
31	It seems that more people are who are worried about risk are comfortable wearing a mask in person.	1/22/2023 6:15 PM
32	I have no personal health risk today. However, if even one TMM cannot attend due to health risk from Covid, then we should all meet online. Period. To do otherwise is ableist.	1/22/2023 5:41 PM
33	The hours do not work for my real life work schedule. Though I prefer in person.	1/22/2023 5:27 PM
34	Have you considered putting tell meting in a larger venue such as the high school auditorium? That would allow TMMs to participate in person and avoid the close quarters of town hall.	1/22/2023 5:08 PM

Q36 Hypothetically, if the health risks from COVID-19 become negligible and laws are changed to allow towns to offer remote and hybrid participation in Town Meeting without requiring a health-safety justification, which statement would best reflect your preferences about how we conduct Town Meeting:

Answered: 165 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Entirely in person	37.58%	62
Entirely remotely	8.48%	14
Hybrid of remote and in-person participation	41.21%	68
Other (please specify)	12.73%	21
TOTAL		165

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	If it's not too onerous hybrid	2/6/2023 3:26 AM
2	"If" is the operative term- I do not currently judge current covid risk to be negligible. If it truly were, I'd prefer in-person meetings	2/1/2023 5:17 PM
3	We need this combination at all times going forward and ill frustrated that our legislature is so slow to take this up again. It would also allow participation by those with disabilities and with young children, or those who fell under the weather but well enough to participate.	2/1/2023 12:18 PM
4	Hybrid meetings without the technology both on the town side and participant side is really suboptimal	1/30/2023 7:34 PM
5	I prefer In Person, but I feel we can have more participation from young parents (and younger	1/25/2023 8:20 PM

2022 Annual Town Meeting Feedback

	people in general) if we allow some remote participation	
6	I was amazed at the amount of TMMs who now speak up because we have been remote. Participation is so much better and we hear from other than the dozen or so members that always speak because they are not afraid of public, in person speaking. The number of women speaking now, in all remote, has skyrocketed. It is fantastic.	1/25/2023 12:22 PM
7	Some people will spin "covid" as an eternal "emergency" granting themselves unlimited powers to change anything at will in the absence of any authority. These people are the threat to the republic. And democracy.	1/24/2023 10:30 PM
8	The term "Hybrid" is not defined. Does that mean Mondays in person and Wednesdays on line? or some in person each night and some in person? In the latter case I think it would be too difficult to balance participation between in person and remote. I would not be in favor without knowing the procedures.	1/24/2023 12:35 PM
9	Zoom Formats present too many opportunities to game the system. Democracy is at peril, those more adept at technology advantaged, the Enclosure is violated.	1/24/2023 9:32 AM
10	I have physical constraints that make it very hard for me to sit for 3 hours, so an in person meeting would be very hard for me to participate in fully. Also, I feel like it would be hard to prepare for an in person in terms of having all of the relevant information on hand without access to a computer	1/24/2023 9:03 AM
11	I think hybrid would be to complex and significantly slow the process.	1/23/2023 8:14 PM
12	Due to technical headaches, allowing a small amount of remote participation for medical and unforeseen reasons would be preferable to a significant amount of people using it for convenience.	1/23/2023 3:07 PM
13	I would attend in person, but we seem to get better attendance with remote meetings... even though the logistics are more difficult. It's a tough call.	1/23/2023 2:56 PM
14	I like the idea of hybrid but think also it will give an advantage to people on the floor. If it were hybrid I would attend in person if I thought I wanted to speak but stay home if I just wanted to hear the debate and then vote, such as budget discussions.	1/23/2023 8:51 AM
15	Due to the ages of some of our members, I strongly feel a remote or hybrid model is important for their health. This would also allow the participation from members who are feeling sick (I encourage you to let members know that if they feel sick they should participate remotely).	1/23/2023 7:34 AM
16	If people get COVID it would be best to not incentivize attendance but allow them to listen to debate and vote	1/22/2023 10:42 PM
17	Very much depends on the quality of the hybrid solution. Town hall and town meeting a tricky (read expensive) space and meeting format to do well for hybrid. The staffing and technology levels would need to be high.	1/22/2023 9:52 PM
18	I would run a trial of hybrid of remote and in-person to see how it goes, but if it doesn't work well, I would resume either in person or remote.	1/22/2023 8:52 PM
19	I understand that hybrid is very difficult to fairly combine speakers/debate and voting...it would be wonderful if it could work. It makes it more possible for many parents, differently abled folks, people traveling for business as well as immune compromised folks to participate. I like being able to talk in real time with folks at TM. I Did participate with a precinct group last year but not the really large group that some folks had online. Sometimes you need peer group to bounce ideas/understand speakers/how it applies to your precinct! Educate others about your spheres of knowledge.	1/22/2023 6:48 PM
20	I could see a benefit to doing some meetings remotely (perhaps the meeting where we vote on the consent agenda and the resolutions could be remote. For substantive issues I would rather meet in person so that it goes faster....and I get to support a local team by buying brownies.	1/22/2023 6:15 PM
21	See above re comment concerning venue	1/22/2023 5:08 PM

Q37 Please share any further thoughts about the in-person vs. remote considerations.

Answered: 82 Skipped: 83

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	It would be nice to figure out a balance of in person and remote. I would be a fan of Mondays at town hall and Wednesdays remote, thereby giving each person their preference ½ the time.	2/12/2023 4:27 PM
2	As a parent it is very hard to attend Arlington's Toan Meeting. This is especially true if the meeting starts before 8pm. Hybrid or remote makes it possible for more people to participate.	2/6/2023 7:21 AM
3	Requiring masks is important and declining if symptomatic with coughing sneezing etc	2/6/2023 3:26 AM
4	I would definitely NOT advocate for hybrid Town Meeting. It makes it exponentially harder to keep track of in-person and virtual discussions. The virtual Town Meeting while convenient is less than ideal for debate as we have seen the last few years - while both moderators have done their best to make it work well it has its clear challenges. There is no opportunity to make social connections or even discuss articles with your neighbor or during the break. Virtual Town Meeting allows for anyone who feels the need to have their voice heard, heard. When it is in-person people tend to "pass" - too much effort walking up to the front if the point has already been made. Town Meeting is best held in person.	2/5/2023 4:27 PM
5	Hybrid is a bad idea for Town Meeting. The known time-wasting hassles of remote meetings- prolonged time for voting, additional time to handle technical problems, way too many Points of Order that aren't really Points of Order, etc. - would overwhelm the benefits of in-person meeting. Hybrid can work for smaller bodies like Select Board or School Committee, but not for our 252-member Town Meeting.	2/4/2023 8:44 PM
6	I really hope we do remote town meeting again this year. The current spikes in infection rates make me nervous for anything in-person at this time.	2/3/2023 3:28 PM
7	Hybrid would be helpful if someone was sick or traveling, but remote should only be allowed under those types of limited circumstances (not just because staying at home is more convenient).	2/1/2023 7:00 PM
8	See above. I feel the meetings this year should be virtual. Maybe if weather allows, some towards the end could be outside. But weather is so iffy here. Or here could be a party at the end outdoors to celebrate the end.	2/1/2023 12:18 PM
9	Hybrid improves accessibility and diversity which inherently improves the representation we provide to the town. Inclusive meetings will ensure we're including perspectives of more residents which matters.	1/31/2023 7:30 PM
10	I believe remote participation would allow a wider group of citizens to be involved.	1/31/2023 4:38 PM
11	People are nervous to stand and speak and are more concise. on Zoom people will bloviate. I don't see that it's fair to have different times based on where the speaker is but it sure feels like much more talking on zoom.	1/31/2023 3:23 PM
12	Part of being in TM is a commitment to MEET. Voting, debate and civil discourse cannot be successful long term, done remotely. We did what we had to do at the height of COVID. Other meetings are fine remote to allow all to be able to access fairly. but this is an elected body, elected to meet and vote. Not be home remotely logging in. In person participation should resume.	1/31/2023 2:52 PM
13	I hope that we are back in person but that we find a way to accommodate those with health concerns. I do think that hybrid may allow for more participation for those with children, those caring for others/elders, and other folks so I'm hoping there's a way to be hybrid that is feasible and inclusive. But I would definitely attend in person.	1/31/2023 2:26 PM
14	Remote participation allows for parents and limited-mobility individuals to participate. The disadvantage is the social, face-to-face aspect, the ability to "read the room"; but I think it's	1/31/2023 2:24 PM

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mostly for the better to keep a hybrid option if possible.

15	I strongly recommend against hybrid Town Meetings. Hybrid meetings are difficult in the best of circumstances, and I do not think TM lends itself to this.	1/31/2023 2:18 PM
16	I would highly ask for the remote option as it has been a gamechanger for me and being a parent - it makes a huge difference to me and my family in terms of access.	1/31/2023 2:16 PM
17	I would highly prefer remote town meeting, I also think we would have more participants remotely.	1/31/2023 2:09 PM
18	The group dynamics of remote are much different than in person, and I think are less productive. In particular, I think debates were often cut off prematurely.	1/31/2023 1:57 PM
19	I believe strongly in hybrid for town bodies but I also do not think it will work well for town meeting. If COVID and other infectious disease risk is negligible I believe we should be entirely in person.	1/31/2023 9:17 AM
20	I think it would be nice for TMMs to come together once, maybe at the beginning of the TM season, but generally I think remote participation is the most accessible, not just for those with health risks, but for parents/caretakers, those who travel for work, etc.	1/30/2023 5:09 PM
21	The whole transparency of the speaker list thing was a disaster. We did not get equal debate from all sides of an issue. The zoom platform was buggy and i did not care at all about the meaningless statistics and data that the Moderator was keeping relative to number Articles done and to go, etc. These were meaningless matrixes. The entire meeting was inefficient, poorly planned and run.	1/30/2023 2:08 PM
22	I would try the hybrid model, but be ready to revert to entirely in person if it didn't work. I don't think we should stay entirely remote - I've been in the in-person meetings, and there's a benefit to being 'in the room'.	1/29/2023 3:24 PM
23	I would prefer remote-only, but b/c I know that some people like to be in-person, I would like for them to have that option. Unfortunately, I suspect that those who want in-person won't be happy initially unless everyone is in-person. Finally, I think attendance will be higher if TM is all-remote or hybrid. If it's all in-person, it'll likely return to its former pattern.	1/26/2023 9:37 PM
24	Remote is really convenient in some instances but in-person interactions with other participants are also so valuable. I think if we had a hybrid option, and it felt comfortable from a health perspective, I would attend in person most of the time but if really pressed for time for some other reason, might attend remotely once or twice. If hybrid is really too hard to effectively implement, and covid risks are negligible, though, I prefer in person.	1/26/2023 1:38 PM
25	There is definitely an inner clique involved that message and influence each other during town meeting. I think having remote meetings adds to this as they text each other during the meetings. I feel like I am back in highschool.	1/26/2023 11:51 AM
26	Having a remote option broadens who can participate in Town Meeting and encourages increased participation.	1/26/2023 7:46 AM
27	People who wish to speak on a question should try to appear in person, or delegate someone to speak on their behalf.	1/25/2023 8:20 PM
28	I sincerely hope we stay remote this year. I am not willing to risk my health and will most likely drop out of TM if it is in person. I also believe the remote forum of the last few years has increased participation in a profound way. If we do go back in person please consider bringing a microphone to seated members versus having them walk to a podium. Perhaps this would be a way to retain the increased participation. Public speaking is terrifying!	1/25/2023 12:22 PM
29	Kudos to the moderator starting out with such emotionally charged issues!	1/25/2023 9:12 AM
30	I would like to give Hybrid a try. I liked being remote last year because I could do other work while people spoke repetitively or made incoherent arguments, or joined the conversation without knowing what was going on. On the other hand, I've heard things move much more quickly in person.	1/25/2023 9:00 AM
31	I am very skeptical that a hybrid meeting can be effective.	1/24/2023 9:12 PM
32	We are still in a crisis and crisis rules apply. And I think that once the crisis passes there may be a role for remote testimony and debate. But when that happens voting should be limited to	1/24/2023 4:24 PM

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members physically present. We need to share that experience fully.

33	I think we should either be all in person or all remote because I can't imagine how to balance participation. Managing two different speaker lists is only the beginning. The town hall does not have the sound or video system to allow remote people to know what is going on. But I would like to explore having Mondays in person and Wednesdays remote.	1/24/2023 12:35 PM
34	I'm hoping this year is in-person.	1/24/2023 10:18 AM
35	Given current state of Covid, it seems like an in-person meeting would be unwise. I know so many people who are just getting Covid for the first time. I would encourage exploration of technical solutions to hybrid, and possibly using a bigger space than town hall. As far as this survey goes - thanks for doing it. But I wish that the comments boxes were only available when choosing other.	1/24/2023 9:55 AM
36	Democracy is disadvantaged with virtual town meetings. Please have an in person Town Meeting in 2023	1/24/2023 9:32 AM
37	Zoom meeting is a disaster that wastes everyone's time. The second to last question (question numbers would have helped here) implies that if enough people say they can't attend due to health it will affect the decision, is that right? If schools, theaters, etc. are able to assemble then TM can as well.	1/23/2023 9:30 PM
38	While I think fully remote is cumbersome and slow, I feel even more strongly that hybrid would be the worst option of all. It creates two separate groups of participants, technology is spotty, and as the Chair of a Committee in town, it has created many more issues and challenges to equitable participation than fully in-person or fully remote meetings. I am strongly against a hybrid option.	1/23/2023 8:49 PM
39	Last year was the longest Town Meeting in many years. We should aim to keep it to no more than 6 meetings or risk losing our town form of government.	1/23/2023 8:14 PM
40	Remote Town Meetings lack the important aspect of developing person-to-person relationships.	1/23/2023 3:11 PM
41	My preference would be in-person, though I see advantages and disadvantages to both methods of meeting. In general though, the quantity of participation is higher with remote, but the quality of participation is higher in-person.	1/23/2023 3:07 PM
42	I think we should ask people to do a rapid Covid test and wear a mask.	1/23/2023 2:36 PM
43	My wife and I are in our 80s. This is a group that is still at high risk of the consequences of catching COVID. So while we would be masked I am concerned about spending a lot of time in an indoor space with 240+ people.	1/23/2023 2:00 PM
44	As an elderly TMM I hope that a hybrid model is available regardless--Covid-19 risks are likely to exist to some extent	1/23/2023 1:35 PM
45	This is a very tough call. The convenience of remote meetings is significant, especially for our less-mobile TMMs, those with kids, etc. And yet there are advantages to in-person, such as being able to read the room, that can never be captured remotely. But health and safety should take precedence in making these decisions.	1/23/2023 12:57 PM
46	I would love to see us tackle hybrid at some point but we would need the right technology and specific moderation efforts to make it work.	1/23/2023 10:01 AM
47	This absolutely depends on the quality of the moderation and the speed and efficiency with which we can conduct our business. I like the fully remote option but I think it was managed poorly and was long and painful last year. We can't make this our new normal unless we can fix all of those technical problems.	1/23/2023 9:40 AM
48	Tough decision. One more comment I want to share is how incredibly helpful it was for me to have the staff support. I attended some of the sessions from remote locations with just an iPad and voted not through the portal and every single vote someone said "got it! Thanks for voting" which made me feel heard and appreciated. Big big kudos to the staff for being both helpful and inclusive.	1/23/2023 8:51 AM
49	In person permits one to read the speakers body language .. And permits one to ask questions of those sitting nearby	1/23/2023 7:59 AM
50	I would prefer if there was a masking rule for in person town meeting, although I understand if	1/23/2023 7:34 AM

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you can not do this legally.

51	Please keep asking members their preference as town meeting nears. In person would be great, especially for new members	1/22/2023 11:09 PM
52	I very much hope to be in person this year. In terms of some future potential hybrid option, I can see the potential benefits in terms of flexibility for TMMs, but I am skeptical that in-person and remote folks would be able to interact constructively especially on the scale of ~300 people.	1/22/2023 10:58 PM
53	I have yet to attend Town Meeting in person and I am looking forward to doing so. However, having a remote option is extremely convenient (especially for people with kids) and I hope that we are able to have hybrid meeting options in the future. I hope we don't have to do all remote.	1/22/2023 10:17 PM
54	Oh, I have so many thoughts. More than this field. Want to come to a remote participation study committee meeting and talk? We've been beating this around for a while. Or just talk.	1/22/2023 9:52 PM
55	I appreciate this survey, but it's based on a remote environment for town meeting. We need to be in person for Town Meeting. Debate was so much better and it takes so much less time to conduct the Town's business. Thank you!	1/22/2023 9:15 PM
56	Remote TM is terrible.	1/22/2023 9:15 PM
57	I don't know we could pull off hybrid fairly. If COVID spikes I'm fine with remote. But we need to find ways to make better sense of voting. I understand that rushing it taxes the system, but it shouldn't take 3 minutes to vote when people can do it in 20 seconds in the hall.	1/22/2023 9:09 PM
58	I currently (in winter - with all the winter germs) prefer virtual town mtg. However, if the choice was made to do it in person, I would attend. If in person mtgs would equate to fewer overall mtgs (because ppl wouldn't drone on as long, might be more hesitant to speak at length and would not have technology issues), that would be an incentive to do it in person. I would likely want to have chairs spread out and would likely mask (perhaps a recommendation to mask from the Town would be helpful). Also, for me personally, remote is helpful since I have young children and can get them to bed just before 8pm and then sign on and if my spouse is not home - that is ok, since I'm here. I am curious if we have seen an increase in parents with young kids join TM in recent years with the remote mtgs as perhaps that lowers the barrier to entry.	1/22/2023 8:52 PM
59	If remote is available then members could attend if testing positive, uncomfortable, or have concurrent family responsibilities	1/22/2023 8:51 PM
60	If in person, everyone would need to be masked and seated a safe distance from each other. Thanks for asking!! Appreciate your taking the time to make and send out this survey	1/22/2023 8:48 PM
61	Though it would be great to meet in person, it's nice to have the option of remote/hybrid for those of us with younger children. I don't always have childcare, and that's a really late night during the week for say a high school babysitter.	1/22/2023 8:31 PM
62	Although I personally would prefer to attend in-person (masked), I understand that this decision depends of the state of the pandemic. It is very important to make hybrid participation possible, as there are multiple reasons (i.e. health, disability, family responsibilities, etc.) that make in-person attendance a burden for people. If we really want to be more inclusive, we need to make hybrid attendance a viable option.	1/22/2023 8:28 PM
63	Time to emerge from caves and return to life like normal people. People can still wear masks if they want to.	1/22/2023 7:48 PM
64	There is no option that makes everyone happy. If necessary, as a majoritarian body we should vote by majority rule.	1/22/2023 7:41 PM
65	Remote makes it significantly easier to be a town meeting member as a working parent. I think making remote TM work addresses a big gap in representation and should be continued even if it incurs moderate expense.	1/22/2023 7:39 PM
66	Hybrid allows me to move around and stretch. The chairs in Town Hall are not back friendly for an elder.	1/22/2023 7:33 PM
67	The role of the moderator is to lead the meeting to the decision it wants to make. Nothing more. There were too many specious points of order, and the moderator took too much time	1/22/2023 7:20 PM

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discussing them. Votes were held open much too long when a handful of members didn't record a vote - a waste of time when the vote was 212-2. All resolutions should be placed on the consent agenda, with only one pro and one con speaker if it is pulled off the consent agenda. We should not be allowed to amend them - especially when the amendment is to the non-binding whereas section. There was far too much time wasted, and the meeting went much too long.

68	I cannot see hybrid being a successful model for town meeting. I prefer in-person to remote and would suggest people be required to wear masks if there is still much transmission of COVID in the spring. I'm immune compromised and think having in-person without a mask requirement, (or maybe putting unmasked members in the balcony?) is effectively discriminating against those with compromised immune systems.	1/22/2023 7:17 PM
69	Please may we all be in person again. Online was just agony. My fear is that hybrid would be the worst of all worlds. I understand people's fears. If members are properly vaccinated and boosted, their risks are well moderated. If the town provided members with tests to be used before every session, that would help limit exposure. I would likely wear a mask in my seat and remove it at the lectern to speak. We could try to spread out the chairs a bit more on the floor. We could allow members to sit in the balcony, but that would cause confusion. There are a few members who would prefer to remain remote for health reasons, and I respect their unease. I also understand that being in person imposes a restriction on who will participate and be represented. I think that has always been true, and it is just an unfortunate reality. People who work nights cannot be members. I don't think we offer services for the deaf or blind, although I would hope that would be provided should the need arise. We can offer masks and strongly encourage their use. That and cross our fingers.	1/22/2023 6:45 PM
70	Hybrid is a good compromise, especially since folks who serve on Town Meeting may have other things to manage (watching younger kids, COVID risks, etc). It would also encourage more voices in Town Meeting, especially those who may be parents of younger children, caregivers of older folks, or folks who are disabled (especially given Town Hall isn't easily accessible)	1/22/2023 6:26 PM
71	The poor ventilation at Town Hall and the crowded quarters of Town Meeting are a health hazard as long as Covid kills.	1/22/2023 6:19 PM
72	If in person can we have people worried about health risks in the balcony spread out?	1/22/2023 6:15 PM
73	Remote town meeting takes longer, but I find it a more relaxed environment.	1/22/2023 6:01 PM
74	Entirely remotely is the most equitably accessible model. It does have disadvantages, but I think creating a new online meeting culture is possible and future-focused. Improvements could include being able to see each other on camera, as in a large-scale Zoom meeting. Could break out rooms be used somehow? I could support the hybrid model with CONSIDERABLE planning and training (esp of TMM's, because the culture of TMM would have to shift) that wouldn't marginalize the participation by those not in person.	1/22/2023 5:41 PM
75	I think that to be most inclusive, especially for those with physical and health issues that make it hard or impossible to attend in person, we should find a way to be hybrid.	1/22/2023 5:23 PM
76	There are many reasons that hybrid town meeting (and other Arlington meetings) would make participation possible for residents. I strongly support hybrid meetings and hope that it will be possible to continue zoom or hybrid town meeting moving forward.	1/22/2023 5:18 PM
77	The floor chatter is extremely valuable. The networking and connections made are extremely valuable. "Reading the room" is extremely important. In-person is the way to go. If this is not possible, then the little meters showing members reactions (as mentioned above, and I believe I suggested last year) would be really helpful.	1/22/2023 5:04 PM
78	Remote Town Meeting was ridiculously long. Just the logistics added hours and hours to the meeting length. Too much whining about the rules and debate and what was "fair"!	1/22/2023 4:58 PM
79	Attract younger people both homeowners and residents. Time to provide the knowledge for younger members to take a more active role.	1/22/2023 4:56 PM
80	As a recent TMM, I have only participated in TM online. I am told that in person TMs are more efficient. However, being able to join from home is extremely convenient for members with family obligations. I am not sure I would continue as TMM should we move to in person meetings. The Moderator should be aggressive in including items on the consent agenda to	1/22/2023 4:43 PM

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limit the number of articles up for debate. This past year, there was a fair bit of confusion about removing items from the concent agenda. Clear guidelines would be helpful. Also, I would recommend considering no debate/comment on resolutions.

81	We have had a very unusual Town Meeting over the past several years. I thought the immediate Town Meeting at AHS to protect members and meet the Towns needs was great. Last year, the meetings were bogged down and slow. I have a lot going on in my personal and business life and decided not t seek reelection this year.	1/22/2023 4:40 PM
82	Hybrid is fine as long as people with technical difficulties are not permitted to derail the entire meeting.	1/22/2023 4:31 PM